Flowers for the Women Wearing Veils

A Collection of Addresses to Women
by Hazrat Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad, Khalifat-ul-Masih II[ra]

VOLUME I

Al-Azhāru Li Dhawātil-Khamār

Orhnī Wāliyoń Kei Liye Phūl

Flowers for the Women Wearing Veils

Volume 1

A Collection of Addresses to Women

Delivered by
Hazrat Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad,
Khalifat-ul-Masih II[ra]

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Volume 1

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Our heartfelt thanks go to all those who contributed to this project. The translation work for this volume of addresses to women by Khalifat-ul-Masih II[ra] was initiated in 2007 under Dr. Shanaz Butt, who served as Sadr Lajna USA 2000 - 2010. Sadiqa Mian took on the project initially serving as Translations in-charge assisted by Sadia Munir and Nadia Ahmad. There were many volunteers at this stage too numerous to list, who helped with translations. The reviewers of the initial project included Aasilah Faheem, Dr. Amtul Ahmad, Dr. Aziza Rahman, Mubarika Shah, Sadka Ahmad, Shazia Sohail, Tazeen Ahmad and Bushra Salam-Bajwa. The initial project was sent to Markaz for review in 2011 under Saliha Malik, who served as Sadr Lajna USA 2010 – 2018. Upon receiving extensive advice from Walakat-e-Tasnif in 2013, she appointed Nila Ahmad to rework the translation for a cohesive and integrated standard. Saliha Malik then served as Editor-in-charge from 2019 for the final copy and it was prepared for printing by Naila Kanwal Butt, member of Lajna USA Isha'at Department.

May Allah bless this work, and may it be a source of spiritual enlightenment and knowledge to all who read and reflect upon this vast treasure of invaluable advice given to women by Khalifat-ul-Masih II, Hazrat Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad[ra], *Amīn*.

The Lajna Ima'illah (Assembly of the Maidservants of God) is an international Muslim women's organization, established by Hazrat Khalifat-ul-Masih II[ra], the second successor to the Promised Messiah[as], as a vital branch of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community. The Lajna Ima'illah's objectives are to serve the spiritual and intellectual development of Ahmadi Muslim women, to enable them to raise their children in the practice of Islam and to serve humanity through beneficial programs.

أعوذُ بِاللّٰهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطٰنِ الرَّجِيمِ

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ

نَحمَدُہ وَ نُصَلّي عَلیٰ رسُولِہ الکَرِیم

وَعلیٰ عبدہ المسیح الموعُود

خُدا کے فضل اور رحم کے ساتھ

ھوالنّاصر

I seek refuge with Allah from Satan, the rejected.

In the name of Allah, Most Gracious, Ever Merciful

We praise and invoke blessings on His Noble Messenger

And His servant, the Promised Messiah

With Allah's Blessings and Mercy

He is the Helper

بہر اعلائے دین مصطفوی وقف پیری تیری شباب ترا
دے خدا اجر بے حساب تجھے ہم پہ احساں ہے بے حساب ترا

For the utmost progress of the religion of Muhammad[sa]
You have devoted your youth and old age
May Allah bestow countless rewards upon you
Your favors are countless upon us

Hazrat Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad
Khalifat-ul-Masih II[ra]

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Glossary

Ādamī	A person from Adam / human beings
Adhān	Call to Prayer
Al Hamdu Lillah	All praise belongs to Allah
Al-Fazl	A publication of the Ahmadiyya Community
Anjuman	Governing body / office in charge of administrative affairs of the Community
Bai‘at	Pledge of allegiance at the hands of a Prophet or his successor
Burqa	Outer garment/ covering according to Islamic Purdah
Chanda	Donation(s) / financial sacrifice
Dars	Religious Lecture(s)
Doli	A curtained carriage carried by men to transport women
Fardh	Obligatory prayer
Hadith	Saying of the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa]
Hazrat	His Holiness / Her Holiness
Huzoor	Your Honor / Holiness, His Honor / Holiness
Ijtema	Gathering / refers to gatherings of the women’s auxiliary
Imam	A person who leads the prayers / leader
Insaan	Human (lit. two loves)
In Sha’Allah	God willing
Islam	Peace, purity, submission and obedience to the will of God
Itikaf	Seclusion for prayers in the last ten days of Ramadhan
Jalsa Salana	Annual Convention of the Ahmadiyya Community
Jama‘at	Community / Ahmadiyya Muslim Community
Jihad	Striving to attain nearness to Allah/ struggle against evil inclinations / fighting in self-defense against an enemy
Kalima Shahada	Declaration of Islamic Faith
Khalifa	Caliph, successor, vicegerent
Khalifat-ul-Masih	Successor to the Promised Messiah
Khātamun-Nabiyyin	Seal of the Prophets

Khilafat	System of Caliphate: the successor to the Prophet
Majlis-e-Mushawarat	An assembly of Jama‘at representatives for mutual consultation
Marasi	Street singer /village entertainer
Markaz	Headquarters
Maulvi	Religious cleric / may be an earned degree holder
Maulvi Fazl	A degree in Islamic education
Mehr	Money a husband gives to his wife upon marriage
Mian	A term of endearment
Mi‘raj	The apex of spirituality/ the event mentioned in Surah An-Najm
Nawafil / Nafl	Voluntary Prayers
Na’udhu Billah	We seek refuge with Allah / God forbid
Nikah	Muslim Marriage contract / sermon
Pathans	Ethnic Afghans
Purdah	Islamic concept of modest covering
Rabb	Lord / Nurturer / Sustainer
Sahabiat	Female companions of the Holy Prophet[sa]
Salaam	Greeting of peace
Salāt	Formal prayer
Shariah	The Islamic Law
Shirk	Associating partners with God
Siddiq	Truthful
Sunnah	Blessed practices / actions of the Holy Prophet[sa]
Tabligh	Propagation of the faith
Taqwa	Love and fear of God / righteousness
Tarbiyat	Moral training
Tayyiba	Pure
Ummah	Spiritual community / followers
Waqf	Lifelong devotion to religious services for the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community
Waqif(een)	Lifelong devotee(s) of the Ahmadiyya Community
Wudu	Ablution

Abbreviations

The following abbreviations have been used in superscript. Readers are urged to recite the full salutations:

sa *sallallāhu ‘alaihi wa sallam*, meaning ‘may the peace and blessings of Allah be upon him’ is written after the name of the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa].

as *‘alaihis-salaam*, meaning ‘may peace be upon him’ is written after the names of Prophets other than the Holy Prophet Muhammad[as].

ra *radiyallahu ’anhu/’anha/’anhum*, meaning ‘may Allah be pleased with him/her/them’ is written after the names of the Companions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] or of the Promised Messiah[as].

rh *rahimullah ta’ala* meaning ‘may Allah shower His Mercy upon him’ is written after the names of deceased pious Muslims who are not Companions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] or of the Promised Messiah[as].

ab *ayyadahullahu ta’ala bi-nasrihil-‘aziz* meaning ‘may Allah be his Helper’ and is used at the mention of the current Khalifa[ab].

FOREWORD

By Hazrat Sayyeda Umme-Mateen Maryam Siddiqa[rh]
(May the Most High grant her a long life)
National Sadr, Lajna Ima'illah

Throughout his *Khilafat,* Hazrat Musleh Mau'ud[ra] addressed women in various gatherings for the objective of their moral training. These speeches comprise a vast treasure of knowledge, through which he enlightened the Lajna upon various aspects of spiritual knowledge, emphasized their moral training and drew their attention towards their national responsibilities. At times, he highlighted the key points of moral training of their children and at other times he developed their own natural abilities. Such speeches, therefore, will always serve as a guiding light for women. In fulfilling his desire, I compiled a collection of Hazrat Musleh Mau'ud's[ra] speeches for publication in 1946. In one of his addresses, he explained:

"Moral training is necessary to accomplish this purpose. Mere lectures will not accomplish this task. To this end, it is imperative to create a manual for the nation and to write a book, outlining how women should raise their children. This must be done, so that women can read from it and implement it within their lives. Otherwise, it would be impossible for one to keep files of the Daily *Al-Fazl* [a publication of the Ahmadiyya Community] or the Review on hand, mark the pertinent points where training issues are mentioned, and regularly refer to them in order to implement those objectives. However, if such material is collected in one volume and is either included in our women's coursework [of study] or is read on its own whilst applying it in their lives, it could prove to be most beneficial." (December 1, 1928)

The previous edition consisted of addresses up until 1944. Now that this blessed personality who came to be the means of "…procuring the release of those held in bondage" is no longer among us, it was necessary to reprint the collection of all his speeches, in order that women act upon his advice and the Lajna benefit from it when putting together their programs. An effort has

been made to publish within this collection, each and every speech Hazrat Musleh Mau'ud[ra] gave concerning women. It is possible that a speech may have been overlooked in the compilation of this book. If any brother or sister is aware of any speech or directive of Hazrat Musleh Mau'ud[ra], which has been previously printed in some newspaper, but has been left out of this collection, then certainly inform me. It will be included in a future edition. My fellow sisters should now purchase this book, study it and follow the advice of Hazrat Musleh Mau'ud[ra]. They should continue to pray for this benefactor of women who spent his nights and days in search of the ways and means for their progress and welfare. May Allah enable you in this endeavor, *Amīn*.

In the preparation of this book, respected Abdul Bari Qayyum has greatly assisted me in photocopying speeches from the *Al-Fazl* archives and locating and duplicating a number of speeches from various newspapers. I am grateful to him. May Allah grant him a good reward.

Respected Sheikh Khurshid Ahmad, Assistant Editor of *Al-Fazl,* and his dear wife, Mrs. Amtul Latif, Secretary Publications of the National Lajna Ima'illah, were entrusted with the entire workload of printing. They were absorbed night and day in the task of successfully printing this book. May God Almighty grant them a good reward.

Regarding the distribution of this book, Lajna should make every effort that at least one copy of this book reaches every Ahmadi household. This book is a vast treasure of precious advice from Hazrat Musleh-e-Mau'ud[ra], the reading of which is essential for Ahmadi women, in order that they may mold their lives within its halo of light, thus living in accordance to the Holy Qur'ān and fulfilling their responsibilities in the best manner, *Amīn Allahumma Amīn.*

Humbly,
Maryam Siddiqa
National Sadr, Lajna Ima'illah
(Served as National Sadr Pakistan from August 1958 - November 1997)

Foreword for this Edition

When Hazrat Musleh Mau'ud[ra] delivered his addresses and speeches in the early years, there was no concept of 'Lajna Ima'illah' and so the educational and spiritual standard of women was lacking. Hazrat Musleh Mau'ud[ra] countered this by empowering women through establishing Lajna Ima'illah as an organization in 1922, and nurturing its progress. Hence at many places Hazrat Musleh Mau'ud[ra], particularly in the early years, alludes to this reality and addresses the women to ignite a sense of honor amongst them so as to awaken the desire to become more empowered and less reliant on men for their religious understanding.

Furthermore, Hazrat Musleh Mau'ud[ra] recognized the importance of re-establishing women's status in the community according to the true teachings of Islam during these years. He helped them to realize that God has given them their rights and they must come forward to participate in the service of religion alongside the men, and the Jama'at could not progress without their equal involvement. In this way, the women learned to advance themselves by utilizing their hidden capacities as they took up the responsibilities that were required of them.

May these addresses continue to uplift women of every age and help them to recognize their potential educationally and spiritually. May they always be ready to serve the Jama'at in striving to please Allah and in doing so come near to Him, *Amīn*.

Saliha Malik
Editor-in-charge

بِسۡمِ اللّٰہِ الرَّحۡمٰنِ الرَّحِیۡمِ

نَحمَدُہٗ وَ نُصَلِّیُ عَلیٰ رَسُوۡلِہ الکَرِیم

In the name of Allah, Most Gracious, Ever Merciful.

We praise and invoke blessings on His Noble Messenger.

Mothers Should Inculcate Good Morals in their Children

Delivered by Hazrat Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad, Khalifat-ul-Masih II[ra]

There are such people who provoke their children by raising their hands whilst shouting, "Should I strike you?" I have observed that after one or two instances, the child begins to make those very same facial expressions and raises his hand in the same manner, crying out "Shall I strike you?" Certain foolish people show their children affection by using offensive language. The child then retaliates by using vulgar language in the same way. There are also those women who constantly speak to their children with an angry expression or frown upon their face and, in turn, their children develop the habit of conversing with an angry countenance. Contrary to this, women who are cheerful and who are in the habit of treating their children kindly, raise children who are likewise cheerful. Mothers should treat their children in such a manner so that if their children imitated them, it would not cause children humiliation or embarrassment for the rest of their lives. Rather [they should raise them in such a manner that] they improve their moral behavior forever.

(*Al-Fazl*, September 3, 1913)

Adopt Piety, so that Your Children Grow to be Pious

Address to the Ladies
Delivered by Hazrat Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad,
Khalifat-ul-Masih II[ra]

Only that child will be without religion or averse to religion, whose parents ridicule religion in his presence (الّا ماشاءالله, [*Illa Masha' Allah*] except what God has willed). If a mother does not offer Salāt and does not confer significance to the prescribed time of Salāt, it is certain that the son will do the same when he grows up. I have often observed that even if the child cannot comprehend [what he says], he will offer the rak'at of Salāt in the same manner as his parents at the time of prayer, if they are regular in offering Salāt. This is a truly blessed habit, which will inevitably help him when he is grown. It is these initial seeds which yield the kind of pleasant fruit that cannot be acquired later in life, no matter how much money is spent.

When something is acquired, a mother should say to the child that this has been sent to us by Allah, Who provides for us, fulfills our needs and heeds our supplications. We should be grateful to Him. At mealtimes, a mother should casually point out to her child the effort and the series of events which take place for the food to be finally presented before the child, requiring no effort on the child's part. [The mother should point out and say to the child], 'This is all due to the favor of that Holy Lord, Who firstly created all of this, and secondly provided the means for it to be prepared for you. Now, it is that same Holy Lord Who makes it beneficial for you.'

Likewise, when putting their child to bed, if mothers wish, they can draw the child's attention to the stars, the moon, and the sky. During the day, they can highlight other phenomenon of nature, which will encourage him to focus his attention towards God Almighty.

I particularly wish for Ahmadi mothers to direct their attention towards this matter and that they should constantly strive to inspire a feeling of devotion to Allah in their small, young children. Instead of

sharing absurd, nonsensical, and immoral tales with them, relate beneficial stories with a moral, which will help them to be more religious. Do not say anything in their presence which could be the basis for instilling immoral behaviors in them. If a child unwittingly speaks or behaves in an un-Islamic manner, he or she should immediately be stopped. Strive to always inculcate a love for Allah within their hearts.

Do not let your children wander loose; do not let them be so free that they begin to violate *Shariah* [the Islamic law]. Keep their activities in check and always supervise them. Do not become unmindful after entrusting your young children to maidservants, since many ills develop solely due to this early negligence.

A mother is often pleased when she sends her child out, thinking, 'Now I will have some time for myself.' Little does she know the sort of company her child keeps and the negative impressions he has formed from witnessing various scenes which will prove extremely damaging in the future. Thus, beware that a little bit of care now serves as protection against countless dangers ahead. Be pious and Godly yourselves so that when your children are grown, they are also pious and Godly.

(*Al-Fazl*, September 10, 1913)

Address to the Ladies

Delivered by Hazrat Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad, Khalifat-ul-Masih II[ra]

July 8, 1915, in Lahore

The Division of Human Beings

God Almighty has created man in two forms: male and female. All human beings are divided into these two categories. Hence, the various *Shariahs* that have been sent by God Almighty addressed not only men, but also women. However, when ignorance and waywardness spread throughout the world, many people wish to release themselves from the obligations of *Shariah*. Just as a wild bull and a headstrong horse are eager to escape their harness by slipping their necks from it, so too do people as ignorance increases, attempt to free themselves from the commands of *Shariah* by hiding behind any possible excuse. In times such as this, when Islam faces difficulty, Muslims have forgotten the Holy Qur'ān and God Almighty's commandments. Wherever men have generally begun to liberate themselves from the *Shariah*, nearly all women, with very few exceptions, have followed suit. The underlying reason for this is that such women never fully comprehended the philosophy of the *Shariah,* and having stumbled, they strayed onto a different path. Yet, the Word of God was revealed for women, just as it was for men.

The Rights of Men and Women

If an ignorant person, due to lack of knowledge, makes a statement to the effect that, "men possess absolute rights" or that "women hold all rights," this is indicative of that individual's narrow-mindedness and shortsightedness. This is because in the sight of God Almighty, men and women are both equal. He has created both and if a man breaks His rules and a woman remains obedient, then that woman is far superior to the man in the sight of God Almighty. Similarly, if a woman disobeys the commands of God Almighty in some way, and the man remains obedient, then that man is far superior

to the woman in the sight of God Almighty. As God Almighty is the Creator of both, He is not exclusively connected with either. In His sight, the two are equal. Thus, the message He has sent is not only for men, but also for women. However, due to Muslim people's lack of education and their ignorance of the *Shariah,* vulgarity and lack of spirituality have spread to such an extent, that they [Muslims] have grown distant from Islam. Ignorance and lack of faith are especially prevalent among women. Many women who come to us for *bai'at* [pledge of allegiance and initiation] cannot even recite the *Kalima Shahada* [declaration of Islamic faith] which states:

اَشْهَدُ اَنْ لَّآ اِلٰهَ اِلَّا اللّٰهُ وَحْدَهٗ لَاشَرِيْكَ
لَهٗ وَاَشْهَدُ اَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهٗ وَرَسُوْلُهٗ

I bear witness that there is no God but Allah, the One, without any partner.
And I bear witness that Muhammad[sa] is His Servant and His Messenger.

How succinct is this tenet and what blessings has God Almighty sent down to encapsulate the whole of the *Shariah* in this phrase. Women memorize many useless poems and are familiar with many tales and stories. However, it has been observed, that when they are asked to recite the declaration of faith, they are unable to do so. Thus, ignorance has spiked among women. However, remember well that the commandments sent down by God Almighty apply equally to both men and women. Just as it is essential for men to act upon them, it is equally crucial for women to do so.

Service of Women to Islam

After reflecting upon the time of the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa], we see that religious knowledge has been conveyed to us by men in the same way that it has by women. When we read in the *Hadith* [saying of the Holy Prophet[sa]], that Hazrat Abu Bakr[ra], Hazrat 'Umar[ra], Hazrat 'Uthman[ra], Hazrat 'Ali[ra], Hazrat Abu Hurairah[ra] and others, have related an account of the Holy Prophet[sa], then by the same token, we also read that Hazrat A'ishah[ra], Hazrat Hafsa[ra], Hazrat Umme Salma[ra] also narrated what the Holy Prophet[sa] explained.

Therefore, the system of narrations of the Holy Prophet[sa] not only comes from men, but also from women. If half of the faith has reached us from men, then the other half has come to us from women. From among those who are renowned scholars today, if they are students to the male companions[ra] of the Holy Prophet[sa], then so too are they students of the female companions[ra]. The portion of the knowledge of *Shariah* related to men has been learned from men, while the portion related to women, has been learned from women. If both men and women had not been involved in this matter, the religion would have remained incomplete. One realizes by studying the early years of Islam, that just as men played their part in spreading the religion, so too did women participate in this effort. Similarly, just as men learned Islam, so did women.

Furthermore, there have been many famous and knowledgeable women in the history of Islam. For example, one woman, by the name of Rabia Basri[ra], would speak only in Qur'ānic verse and would answer questions by reciting from the Holy Qur'ān. She received revelations, visions, and dreams from God Almighty. Likewise, there have been many other women, who have attained nearness to God Almighty and have conversed with God. Nowadays, if you ask a woman about such happenings, she will reply, "I am ignorant. What would I know of such things?" Thus, they equate ignorance with womanhood, even though that is not the case. The Holy Prophet[sa] said, 'If anyone wishes to learn my religion, then learn half [of it] from A'ishah[ra].' The women of that former age were not a different breed; they were exactly like the women of today.

Today, women can be just like them and can carry out the same task as they did, however, [their] shortcoming is that they fail to act. If they are prepared to act, then God Almighty will help them by opening their path for them. In the Holy Qur'ān, God Almighty has repeatedly stated, "Whoever attains to righteousness, Allah Almighty Himself opens up a way [for that person]." When women act according to this verse, how could a path towards progress not be revealed to them? How could they not be useful and a source of blessings for themselves and for the world?

Advice to Ahmadi Women

The women of our Jama‘at [Ahmadiyya Muslim Community] should remove this attitude from their minds that, ‘What can we achieve? Why should we even bother?’ Women can converse with God Almighty in the same way men can. Women can guide the world in the same way men do. Women can also rid the world of ills in the same way as men. There is no difference between women and men in religious matters. Women, like men, can also serve their faith. Thus, bear this well in mind, that God Almighty has bestowed both men and women with similar capabilities. If men can attain perfection and reach God Almighty, then so too can women. If men can preach, so too can women. If men can lead and guide humanity, women can also. Yes, if there is a difference, then it is only that men can perform *tabligh* [propagation] within their own circle and women within theirs. Otherwise, there is no difference. God Almighty has not unlocked the spiritual domain for men, to the exclusion [of women].

Address to Ahmadi Women of Lahore

Lahore is a hub; several magazines and newspapers for women are published from here. Many gatherings take place here. Women from our Jama‘at should remain vigilant and do their utmost to perform *tabligh*. How fortunate is that person, whose efforts inspire hope that God will be pleased with them, compared to those who strive only for material gains? When God Almighty is pleased, the world will inevitably be attained.

I have observed that the women here fret day and night over their pursuit of material advancement. They hold gatherings, write speeches, and publish newspapers and magazines for this purpose. However, since they are unaware of Islamic *Shariah*, they write essays which undermine the religion and invite criticism. On the contrary, if the women of our Jama‘at, to whom God Almighty has given an excellent opportunity to learn the religion, study it themselves and teach it to others, they can rapidly become a source of progress for Islam and for their Jama‘at. When Christian women go out to perform *tabligh*, they go to such places where even men cannot go. When one of them is killed, the other is ready to take her place. When the second

is killed, the third and the fourth go forward in her place. In this way, they convert thousands and hundreds of thousands of people to Christianity.

If Christian women can succeed in their purpose, then how is it possible for Ahmadi women to fail to succeed when they stand to serve God Almighty? Even if they initially have to endure much suffering and difficulty they will [eventually succeed]! However, it is most important that you yourself obtain religious knowledge. This is because what can a woman teach others if she herself is ignorant? Do not think that it is too late to learn. In Qadian, there are scores of women, who have studied the translation of the Holy Qur'ān. There are even some who have learned the translation of the Holy Qur'ān after having a child. So, if someone makes the effort, they can certainly learn.

Whoever is familiar with Urdu should read the translation of the Holy Qur'ān and in the same way they should read the translation of *Hadith* also. As for those who do not know Urdu, just as men come together and one [of them] gives a *dars* [religious lecture], there is no reason why women cannot come together whilst an educated member from amongst them reads out loud to them. If this is not feasible, then why should Maulvi Ghulam Rasool Sahib Rajeki[ra] not give a *dars* to women in the same way he gives a *dars* to men? He can teach the Holy Qur'ān. If not daily, then he can do so at least once a week or once a month. You will be able to convince him to give *dars.* In this way, women who are not educated can also benefit from this.

Religion has been made Easy

Religion is not at all difficult. Allah Almighty states:

وَ لَقَدْ يَسَّرْنَا الْقُرْاٰنَ لِلذِّكْرِ فَهَلْ مِنْ مُّدَّكِرٍ ۝

"And indeed, We have made the Qur'ān easy to remember.
But is there anyone who would take heed?"

(Holy Qur'ān, Ch. 54: V. 18)

Which means, 'We have made the Holy Qur'ān easy for those who would abide by its teachings.' Consequently, is there anyone who

will obtain guidance from the Holy Qur'ān? God Almighty states that it is man's own fault if he does not learn religion; for nothing contained within religion is difficult. There are some women, who are well-versed in the subjects of Mathematics, Geography, English etc., however they are completely unacquainted with religious knowledge, even though the study of religion is relatively easy in comparison to these subjects. Furthermore, the lessons contained within the Qur'ān are in accordance with human nature, because the One who sent down the Holy Qur'ān knew too well what man was capable of and what was beyond his capacity. There is nothing in this religion which goes against reason, nor does it contain anything which cannot be practiced by men, women, the elderly, children, and youth. Indeed, men and women of every nation are able to act upon it.

Thus, plans should be made for women to come together once a week or if this is not possible, then once a month. Maulvi Ghulam Rasool (Rajeki)[ra] can teach the translation of the Holy Qur'ān as well as the elementary points of the *Hadith*, which you can then memorize at home. This is a simple way for you to learn religious knowledge. Bear well in mind that the more one serves one's religion, the more one is respected. Note how the world holds Hazrat A'ishah[ra] and Hazrat Hafsa[ra] in great esteem. This is partly because they were the wives of the Holy Prophet[sa], but also because they expounded upon those aspects of the religion which men were unable to. For as long as the world remains in existence and mankind endures, Muslims will offer up the prayer, 'May Allah be pleased with her' at the mention of their names. Thus, their names will live on forever. Those who read the *Hadith* will pray for them, 'O God! Elevate their status because I have acquired this religion through them.' Therefore, it is a most blessed task to teach religion. In fact, after one's death, it imparts a *sadaqa jaria* [charity with everlasting reward] unlike any other. When those who teach religious knowledge pass away, they are remembered by people who supplicate and say, 'O God! We have been fortunate to receive this blessing through him. So, grant him a great reward for it.' Most certainly, God Almighty rewards and blesses them. The Holy Prophet[sa] has stated, "Anyone who teaches another person good works, also receives the blessing of that [deed]." For example, if one man teaches another how to perform Salāt, when the latter offers his Salāt, not only will he receive blessings for doing so, but so will the person

who taught him.

I have observed that women carry out *tabligh* extremely well among women. Of course, we as men do so among men, however we cannot approach women [to carry out *tabligh*]. Therefore, it is the duty of Ahmadi women to propagate to other women and to teach and advise them about the religion. They should hold gatherings where they invite women and deliver speeches there, as well as write articles for women in magazines and newspapers. As I am in Lahore at this time, my intention is to address you. There are many women in Qadian, who teach the translation of the Holy Qur'ān and the Hadith, as they are knowledgeable in those subjects as well as in Arabic. Originally from here [Lahore], they have settled there [in Qadian]. They are not natives [of Qadian]. In a similar way, all women should make the effort to familiarize themselves with the Holy Qur'ān and the Hadith, in particular the women of Lahore should strive harder. This is because around you there are other women who indeed pursue worldly [pursuits], and care not at all for religion.

God Almighty has made the realm of religion available to you. Other women are struggling to attain their self-acclaimed rights, to eliminate the practice of *purdah* [Islamic concept of modest covering], to obtain an English education, and likewise are engaged in other similar pursuits. They have become absorbed in worldly matters. God Almighty has given you the opportunity to learn the religion yourselves and to teach it to others, and to make your progeny religious. The beliefs which a religious-minded mother can teach her child cannot be taught by the father, no matter how religious he may be, for oftentimes he is out of the house. His influence is therefore not as great as that of the mother, regarding the moral training of their children. Therefore, one solution for this is that you arrange time to study the Holy Qur'ān and *Hadith* with Maulvi Ghulam Rasool[ra], either once a week or once a month, and revise that lesson for the next time.

Secondly, make it your practice to counsel and preach to the women around you. Teach the women in your neighborhood about Salāt and fasting. When you begin to educate them, they will reply, "We are ignorant. We cannot understand this." However, you should

tell them that God Almighty has not only revealed His religion for educated people. Rather, He has revealed it for all people. The ignorant and uneducated are all His creation. God Almighty has blessed us so greatly and presented us with this miracle of Islam. That person upon whom this religion was bestowed and who has no greater equal in his nearness to Allah, was illiterate and could not write even one word. Then how can it be said that Islam is not for the illiterate?

Many of the blessed companions of the Holy Prophet[sa] could not read or write, but the religion made enormous progress based upon their religious understanding and they wholly obeyed the commands of Allah and His Holy Prophet[sa] and taught others. Many women make the excuse that they are not educated, but remember, that when they are presented before God Almighty, they will not be asked whether they were educated or not. Instead, they will be asked, 'Did your mind comprehend the teachings of Islam or not? Which teaching [of Islam] is incomprehensible? Is offering Salāt beyond your understanding?' No matter how weak a person's memory may be, she can memorize the Salāt because it is a concise form of worship. Or does the difficulty lie in understanding the concepts of fasting, Zakat, Hajj, the Unity of Allah Almighty or recognizing the Holy Prophet[sa] as a prophet, or accepting that the Promised Messiah[as] is the Promised Messiah and a prophet of God? None of these teachings are beyond understanding! These are all such beliefs which every single human being can easily comprehend and learn.

Therefore, no woman should think, 'I am not educated.' If she is not educated, she should still learn the religion and impart it to others. It is the duty of both the educated and the uneducated to study religion and practice it. This is precisely why God Almighty has granted intellect to human beings so that one may understand, reflect, and impart knowledge to others.

The Issue of the Death of Jesus[as]

For instance, there are some issues which are of particular importance in relation to our Jama'at. The foremost amongst them is the dispute of the death of Hazrat Jesus[as]. When you speak with any woman, simply instruct her to listen to the translation of these verses,

even if she must listen to it from an opposing maulvi [religious cleric]. The verses are as follows:

اِذْ قَالَ اللّٰهُ يٰعِيْسٰٓى اِنِّيْ مُتَوَفِّيْكَ وَ رَافِعُكَ اِلَيَّ وَ مُطَهِّرُكَ مِنَ الَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْا وَ جَاعِلُ الَّذِيْنَ اتَّبَعُوْكَ فَوْقَ الَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْٓا اِلٰى يَوْمِ الْقِيٰمَةِ ۚ

"Remember the time when Allah said, 'O Jesus, I will cause thee to die a natural death and will raise thee to Myself, and will clear thee (of the charges) of those who disbelieve, and will exalt those who follow thee above those who disbelieve, until the Day of Resurrection;'"

(Holy Qur'ān, Ch. 3: V. 56)

Here, God Almighty first stated regarding Hazrat Jesus[as], 'I will cause thee to die,' and thereafter stated, 'and will raise thee to Myself.' If 'raise thee to Myself,' means to be raised up to the Heavens while alive, then such an interpretation falsifies the verse and in fact accuses God Almighty (*na'ozo billah*) [God forbid] of being ignorant of Arabic. Because if He were to raise Hazrat Jesus[as] up to the Heavens alive, then why would He have first stated in the verse, 'I will cause thee to die,' and then afterwards state, 'and will raise thee?' Was God Almighty so ignorant of the Arabic language that He could not place the words correctly and rendered a sentence incorrect by the arrangement of the phrase?

In fact, the way God Almighty has stated it is proper and correct. When He first states, 'I will cause you to die,' and thereafter, 'raise you,' then that is the correct meaning. In other words, Hazrat Jesus[as] would first die and then his spirit would be raised; not that he would be raised up even before death.

The idea that whatever God Almighty placed first [in the sentence] should have occurred first in the sequence of events and that which follows would have taken place later, is one which can be comprehended by a woman of any intelligence. If this is not so, then

God Almighty (*na'ozo billah*) is subject to the accusation that He is not sensible enough to order events in the proper sequence. Yet, the maulvis correct God's knowledge of Arabic by stating that in actuality,

رَافِعُكَ

"raise thee"

comes first and

مُتَوَفِّيْكَ

"cause you to die"

follows afterwards. This is a great accusation against God Almighty and is deserving of severe punishment. Indeed, this is a straightforward matter.

When it has been proven that Hazrat Jesus[as] has passed away, then it is also clear that the Messiah to come would be from the same *ummah* [spiritual community, followers]. He is Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad[as], who has claimed to be the Messiah and Mahdi.

Unmistakable Evidence of the Truthfulness of the Promised Messiah[as]

Now, it remains to be seen whether the claim of the Promised Messiah[as] is true or not. There is an easy way to discern this as well. Take the example of a boy who says to you that he is your son. However, if he is not really your son, then it is quite unlikely that you would have a suit of clothes made and tailored for him and have all his needs catered for, simply because he has *become* your son. You would, in fact, have him immediately removed from your home. Some people who do this are punished. Likewise, the government will arrest and punish anyone who impersonates a district manager, a toll collector, or a policeman; this is an understandable fact.

In the same way, we observe that a person claims that God Almighty has sent him to reform the world. [He states], 'I am a reformer, I am the Messiah, I am the Mahdi.' This person goes on to live for another thirty years after his claim; he receives a following of four hundred thousand; he achieves victory in every realm while his

enemies and opponents are disgraced, and with each passing day he continues to progress and gain more respect. So tell me, what education do you require to accept his authenticity? Each and every person can easily comprehend [the fact] that if he were an imposter, God Almighty would have certainly punished him. Otherwise, then it must be said (*na'ozo billah*) that God Almighty has grown old and His powers have waned, and as such, He cannot punish anyone. To hold such a belief is tantamount to apostasy.

This is such a plainly clear and simple point that even the most ignorant women can understand. The point is that even though the entire world turned against him - friends and foes, saints and their followers, the English and Arab scholars - all who raised their voices against him, the Promised Messiah[as] stood alone and triumphed over everyone, shepherding thousands of people to stand by him. If the Promised Messiah[as] is an imposter, the existence of God cannot be established either, for He did not do anything [to stop a so-called imposter]. Or, we will have to accept that God Almighty no longer has the power to punish anyone. Previously, He punished Namrood[1], Shaddad[2], Pharaoh[3] and many others. He meted out punishments even thirteen hundred years ago, but now, no matter what anyone does, He cannot punish them. This is a great accusation against the Being of Allah Almighty. Thus, the truth of the matter is that Promised Messiah[as] is true in his claim.

وَ لَوۡ تَقَوَّلَ عَلَيۡنَا بَعۡضَ الۡاَقَاوِيۡلِ ۝ لَاَخَذۡنَا مِنۡهُ بِالۡيَمِيۡنِ ۝
ثُمَّ لَقَطَعۡنَا مِنۡهُ الۡوَتِيۡنَ ۝ فَمَا مِنۡكُمۡ مِّنۡ اَحَدٍ عَنۡهُ حٰجِزِيۡنَ ۝

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[1] **Namrood**, the king of Babylon at the time of Prophet Abraham[as]

[2] **Shaddad**, the king of Iram of the Pillars at the time of Prophet Hud[as]

[3] **Pharaoh**, the king of Egypt at the time of Prophet Moses[as] - all claimed to be god during their reigns and representing the epitome of arrogance, caused their people to worship them. Their civilizations were all immersed in idolatry. All these kings committed acts of extreme cruelty and died unnatural deaths. [Editor]

"And if he had forged and attributed any sayings to Us. We would, surely, have seized him by the right hand. And then, surely, We would have severed his life-artery. And not one of you could have held Our punishment off from him."

(Holy Qur'ān Ch. 69: V. 45-48)

The verse states, 'If he had made a false claim, We would have seized him and destroyed him; We would have severed his life-vein.' This is a proof of the truthfulness of the Holy Prophet[sa], put forth by God. If this is a proof of the truthfulness of the Holy Prophet[sa], why can it not prove the truthfulness of the Promised Messiah[as]? You do not need much knowledge to comprehend this. It is easy and obvious.

Revelations

Similarly, there are those who say that God Almighty once communicated with those close to Him, but He no longer speaks. The response to this statement is also very simple. Has the God who spoke until now become mute (*na'ozo billah*)? Or has He now, for some reason, lost the ability to speak? If this is not the case, then He should continue to listen as He did and He should continue to see as He did in the past. If He once spoke, but no longer does so then one could also assume that God Almighty could once see, but no longer has sight; that He once could hear, but no longer can listen, to the extent that God Almighty was initially a living God, but now is no longer alive. Are these ideas believable? Absolutely not! So, it can be established that as God Almighty spoke and communicated to His people in former days, He continues to do so.

The Way to Success

The Holy Qur'ān conveys [to us] very simple and straightforward ideas. Learn religion yourself, act upon it, and teach it to others. God Almighty has promised:

وَلْتَكُنْ مِّنْكُمْ اُمَّةٌ يَّدْعُوْنَ اِلَى الْخَيْرِ وَ يَاْمُرُوْنَ بِالْمَعْرُوْفِ
وَ يَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ ؕ وَ اُولٰٓئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُوْنَ ۝

"And let there always be among you a body of men who should invite to goodness and enjoin equity and forbid evil. And it is they who shall prosper."

(Holy Qur'ān, Ch. 3: V. 105)

Which means, 'O people! Let there always be among you a Jama'at, who should invite people to goodness and enjoin virtue and forbid that which is prohibited. It is they who shall prosper i.e., such a community will accomplish all its objectives.' Now tell me, who would not wish to succeed? God Almighty has proclaimed that if you preach and propagate the faith, then I will make you successful. People waste their whole lives in search of wealth, but in the end, their efforts are to no avail. Some sacrifice their lives for their friends and relatives, but oftentimes they too cannot help. God Almighty tells us that the world is riddled with hardship. Calamities will befall our fathers, brothers, sons, and husbands. Consequently, you will bear much suffering, but whoever gives herself wholly to God Almighty, God Almighty will give Himself wholly to her. Whosoever becomes Allah's, firstly Allah averts any misfortune which may come her way, but if it is inevitable, He will compensate her with something better. Such women, therefore, make religious as well as temporal gains. Just as no one can harm a person who befriends a king, so too no one can harm one who has established a relationship with God Almighty. Even if she can find no food to eat, still all the kings in the world can do her no harm.

There is a story told of a saintly person. Once a king declared that when he returns from his travels, he would kill this particular saint. When the king began his return journey, the saint's followers advised him that the king was well-nigh. The saint replied, "*Hanooz Delhi Doorast*" (Delhi is still far). The saint continued to give this reply to the point that the king had entered the city. En route, a wall fell upon the king, killing him, and so the saint was saved by God Almighty.

Thus, no person can harm one who has given himself wholly to God Almighty. Another story is of a merchant who entrusted a judge with a portion of his money for safe keeping. Some time passed and the merchant asked for the money back, but the judge refused and

replied, “I did not take anything from you for safe keeping.” The merchant went to the king and informed him of what had happened. The king realized that if he summoned the judge, the judge would be able to refuse to return the money, because the merchant had no proof that he had entrusted the judge with his money. Therefore, the money would not be collected.

The king said to the merchant to wait for him at a certain location when the king leaves for his daily walk and the king would speak there with the merchant. The next day, the merchant did just that and the king conversed with him in front of his companions, including the judge. Following this conversation, when the king had left, the judge called the merchant over and said, “Sir, you mentioned some money. What kind of money was it? Relate to me the details, so I can remember.” The merchant recounted the same details as before. The judge took out some money and gave it to him, saying, “Why did you not tell me of this earlier? I would have given it then.” The merchant had related those exact same details to him earlier, but because the judge had since realized that the merchant was the king’s friend, he now returned the money.

Therefore, if no one can harm whoever is friends with a worldly king, then who on Earth has the power to harm a person who is connected with Allah? Therefore, strive to give yourself wholly to God Almighty. God Almighty has stated, ‘Whoever learns religious knowledge and teaches it to others, I will become his.’ You must remember that this is the key to save yourselves from worldly troubles and to achieve success. May God Almighty give each one of us the ability to do so, *Amīn*.

(*Al-Fazl*, 23 July 1915)

Address to the Ladies

Delivered by Hazrat Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad, Khalifat-ul-Masih II[ra]

October 6, 1917, in Shimla, India

Important Advice for Women

In this age, the first and the foremost exhortation women must pay heed to is that in matters of religion they are just as bound by and required to comply with the laws of *Shariah,* as men are. These days, we face a great problem. Women have it ingrained within their minds that they are incapable of participating in religious concerns. There are many women who believe it is their husband's responsibility to participate in religious matters. Consequently, at this time, the faith of women is no longer unshakable. Ninety five percent of women, or perhaps even more, have accepted religion not because of its truthfulness, but because of their husbands. Today, if the man is Shia, then the woman is Shia as well. If the man is Sunni, the woman is Sunni as well. Tomorrow, if the man converts from being a Shia to Sunni, the woman will also convert to become a Sunni. Her religion is constantly subject to change, dependent upon her husband's choice of religion. Due to this ignorance and lack of understanding, women are bereft of faith.

Ponder over the fact that a person never fears an image of a lion, because they know it cannot cause any harm. Similarly, fire will only cook food if it is real fire. If it is a picture, it cannot do anything. Thus, because women's faith is an imitation, just as simulated fire can be of no use, in the same way, their feigned religion can do them no good.

Religion Should be Accepted Sincerely

Indeed, just as real fire can cook food, sincere faith can be beneficial. It is useless to have faith, merely because your husband desires it. In our country, this is known as a *Rakabi* [saucer] or

Bangani [eggplant] religion. Once, a certain king highly praised eggplant in his court. One of his courtiers, who was given to flattery, also began to praise it, saying that the eggplant looked like a mystic wearing a robe. Its green stem was comparable to a green turban, which wraps around the head. Its green leaves appeared to be a saint rapt in worship. However, a few days later, when the king suffered some discomfort because of it [the eggplant], he mentioned in his court that eggplant was a terrible thing. Upon hearing this, the same courtier said, "Sir, is eggplant even worthy of being called a vegetable? It would be folly to count it is as one of the vegetables. It is indeed an unpleasant and harmful thing." Someone asked him why he was disparaging it now, when a few days earlier, he had praised it. He replied, "I am the king's servant, not the eggplant's. When the king praised it, so did I. Now that he scorns it, I also scorn it." The religion of women is a *Bangani* faith, which is why we find so many women accepting their husband's religion in this fashion, *Illa Ma Sha' Allah* [Except what Allah has willed].

Women's Need for Faith

The Holy Qur'ān teaches that faith can only be beneficial through sincerity and understanding of the truth. Some say that women have been created merely for the pleasure and comfort of men, but this is not what Islam says. On the contrary, it explains that women are as bound by *Shariah* as men are and it is just as necessary for men to comply with the rules of *Shariah* as it is for women to comply with them. Women are not like sheep and cattle, meant for the convenience of mankind with no independent purpose behind their creation. Thus, the Holy Qur'ān is for women, just as it is for men. A pious woman who follows its edicts, is promised Heaven and whoso goes against it, will receive the punishment of Hell. Therefore, the first requirement is to convince women that religion is just as essential for them as for men, in order that they understand the essence of Islam. When one needs something, they learn the method for attaining it; and when they understand its truth, they then make an effort to achieve it. Thus, women have the same right as men to acquire religion, because it is just as harmful for them to break the rules of religion, as it is for men. Hence, why should women not learn religion in the same manner as men?

If one understands the benefit religion can offer, then such a person will believe in God and will abide by His commands. However, if a person is unaware of this [benefit], then why should they trust God? It would be better to not believe. As long as a person remains ignorant of the advantages or disadvantages of accepting or rejecting the prophets, then why would they believe in them? Thus, it is necessary to be aware of the value and truth of these matters, and women should acquire religious education in the same manner as men.

Righteous Women Mentioned in the Holy Qur'ān

We find mention of two pious women in the Holy Qur'ān, one of them being the wife of Pharaoh. It was not to be Pharaoh's lot, but his wife chose righteousness, and she understood the need for religion and accepted Hazrat Moses[as]. God Almighty has mentioned her in the Holy Qur'ān as an example. What greater honor can there be, than to have the honor of being mentioned in a Book that will last for all eternity? The reason for this is that she had recognized that women had the same responsibilities concerning religion as men did.

The second example is that of Hazrat Mary. She was the mother of Hazrat Jesus[as]. In a time when waywardness was at its height, she exhibited such restraint that her son attained prophethood. The world not only owes a great debt to Hazrat Jesus[as], but also owes a great debt to Hazrat Mary. For it was her training which produced the man who conferred great favors upon mankind. The Holy Qur'ān states that she was a very pious and chaste woman. Her child learned righteousness from her. Thus, it should be noted that where the Holy Qur'ān mentions Hazrat Jesus[as], it also mentions Hazrat Mary.

Women's Service to Islam

Next, we see that when darkness had reached its height during the time of our Holy Prophet[sa], women served their religion tremendously, for they understood that they could serve their religion, just as men did. Some of you may not be aware that the first person to believe in the Holy Prophet[sa] was a woman. The Holy Prophet[sa] would worship in the cave of Hira, and it was there that the Angel Gabriel descended upon him and recited the Word of God. As the Holy

Prophet[sa] had never encountered such a phenomenon, he was unable to comprehend it and worried that he was being deceived by his mind or that he might be mistaken. Frightened, he told Hazrat Khadijah[ra] that he had fallen ill. He may have described his state [of mind] as an illness, but Hazrat Khadijah[ra] was very intelligent. Notwithstanding that revelations did not occur at the time, she realized that this was indeed a revelation from Allah. In this day and age, everyone understands that it is Allah Almighty who sends down revelations, yet people still deny the veracity of the claimant and describe him as insane. Even though Hazrat Khadijah[ra] belonged to a nation which did not believe in God or possess a revealed book, and nor was it even convinced of the existence of revelation, she reassured him that he had indeed received a revelation and was in no way suffering from any ailment. She declared:

كلا و الله لا يخزيک الله ابدا

Absolutely not! By God! God will never disgrace you!

Hazrat Khadijah[ra] said, "You have no ailment. This is most definitively the word of God. You treat people kindly, you strengthen the ties of kinship, and assist them in times of trouble. Therefore, God Almighty will never disgrace you." This one woman set such an example of faith, that even among men, no equal can be found. Additionally, when we look at her conduct, you will find that her faith is no ordinary faith because when enemies began to attack the Holy Prophet[sa], she contributed all her wealth to him to be spent in the path of religion. One could presume that as the wife of the Holy Prophet[sa], the sole intent behind her actions was to preserve her husband's honor. However, this was not the case, nor was she the only woman in Islam's history. There were many others who showed unparalleled examples of sincerity and devotion.

The Sincerity of One Woman

For example, on the occasion of the Battle of Uhud, the disbelievers brought an army of three thousand to face the Holy Prophet[sa] and his one thousand devotees. During combat, a mistake was made by one of the factions of Muslims, due to which the Muslim army lost ground and the Holy Prophet[sa] was suddenly isolated. The disbelievers hurled so many stones at him that he fell to the ground

wounded and lay buried under a heap of dead bodies. When this news reached Medina, which was four miles from Uhud, men and women anxiously turned out in the streets to determine the true state of affairs. Meanwhile, when the Holy Prophet[sa] was pulled out from under the dead bodies, he was found to be alive. Upon hearing this the Muslims rallied together, and the disbelievers retreated.

When the Muslims returned to Medina, the townspeople met them and one Medinite woman, who was neither a relative of the Holy Prophet[sa] nor was she connected to the people of Mecca, stepped forward. Her devotion to the Holy Prophet[sa] was due purely to her sincere faith. She inquired from one of the companions who was walking ahead of the others, "How is the Holy Prophet[sa]?" As he[sa] was alive and was approaching from behind them, the companion considered this question to be irrelevant and instead of answering it, he replied, "Your father has been killed." The woman replied, "I did not ask about my father. I am inquiring about the Messenger of Allah[sa]." Yet he did not respond and went on to say, "Your husband has also been killed." Upon hearing this she said, "I am inquiring after the Messenger of Allah[sa]. How is he[sa]?" Again, he did not answer and stated, "Your brother has been killed." She once more asked, "Why do you not answer my question? I am asking how the Messenger of Allah[sa] is." The companion then replied, "He is well and approaches us." Upon learning this, she said, "*Al-Hamdu Lillah*! [All praise belongs to Allah]. If the Messenger of Allah[sa] is alive, then I care not for anyone else."

Reflect upon this. Imagine the love and attachment this woman had for the Messenger of Allah, due purely to her faith. Consider her sincerity. Consider the condition of a person who loses her young child in this day and age. Yet here, her father is killed, her husband is martyred, her brother is murdered, and she has no son. These are the closest relatives for which pain and grief are felt. If suffered, it would shatter not only the hearts of women, but of men, into tiny fragments. However, this woman harbored such a strong and resolute heart that even when she was given the news of the demise of her father, her brother and her husband, she said *Al-Hamdu Lillah* upon learning of the wellbeing of the Holy Prophet[sa] and cared not for any other grief. There are many other incidents like this. This was one which I related

from the time of the Holy Prophet[sa]. I will now relate an incident which took place after his demise.

Another Example

There was a woman by the name of Hind, who was initially so hostile to the Holy Prophet[sa] that when his[sa] uncle, Hazrat Hamza[ra] was martyred, she tore out his liver and ground it between her teeth in order to cause the Holy Prophet[sa] pain. However, after she accepted him[sa], she served the faith very well and participated in several battles. For instance, in the time of Hazrat 'Umar[ra], the Muslims were battling a large Christian army where they were outnumbered fourteen to one. The Muslims were retreating. At that time, Hind said to her female companions, "These are men, yet they are running away from the enemy. Let us women teach them a lesson." After saying this, they [the women] removed the poles from their tents and created a barricade. They then sent the [retreating] Muslims back by whipping their horses with sticks. At that time, Hind said to her husband, "Have you no shame? When you were a disbeliever, you fought boldly against Islam and now you retreat?" Thus, women have shown many such acts of bravery.

Women Giving Advice in Important Matters

It was the practice of the Holy Prophet[sa], as is proven by *Ahadith* [sayings of the Holy Prophet[sa]] that he would consult his wives on hugely important issues. For instance, when he went for Hajj and the disbelievers stopped him from entering Mecca, the Holy Prophet[sa] asked the Muslims to discard their *Ihraam* [prescribed attire for performing Hajj and Umrah]. When they did not comply, the Holy Prophet[sa] went to his wives and told them of what had passed. They advised him to return quietly and discard his own *Ihraam*[4] after

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[4] Pilgrims remove their ***Ihraam*** and put on ordinary clothes after slaughtering their animal which marks the end of the pilgrimage. As the Muslims were not permitted to perform the pilgrimage on that occasion in accordance with the Treaty of Hudaibiyah which the Holy Prophet[sa] had just signed, he used this activity to bring a close to their wish to do so. *See also page 79.* [Editor]

slaughtering his animal for sacrifice. Upon seeing this, everyone would follow the Holy Prophet[sa]. The Holy Prophet[sa] did exactly this and the remaining Muslims removed their *Ihraam*. Thus, women have always provided great services and given advice in important affairs. Therefore, it is an erroneous assumption on the part of today's women that they are incapable because there is much that they can do. It is just as important for them to teach religion to others as it is for men [to teach religion].

What Women have Accomplished

The wives of the Holy Prophet[sa] would scold men for making errors in religious quandaries and Hazrat A'ishah[ra] would give *dars* [lectures] on the Holy Qur'ān, which men also attended. Likewise, there have been times when women would teach men from behind a curtain. Yet nowadays, the problem is that women themselves are uneducated and they think to themselves, 'What can we do? We cannot do anything.' This way of thinking is utterly wrong. The women of earlier times did not think like this, even when they were uneducated.

The Example of a Woman of Today

Even today, it is observed that women who feel love and affection for their religion are most sincere. For instance, I remember during the time of the Promised Messiah[as], a woman came to him, weeping and saying, "My son has converted to Christianity. Please pray that he recites the *Kalima Shahada* one more time. If he dies afterwards, so be it." The boy had been educated by Christians. Despite having a fever, he ran away. His mother went after him and brought him back. The Promised Messiah[as] reasoned with him and after a few days, he recognized [the truth] and accepted Islam. He passed away two or three days after accepting Islam and his mother did not grieve.

Thus, even now there are such women, though they are rare, that their faith means more to them than anything else. Generally, it is seen that if the husband converts to Christianity, the wife also becomes Christian. That which is her husband's faith, becomes her faith.

However, there are also those women, who would prefer to give up their lives rather than forsake Islam. Yet, who are these women? They are those who understand their faith and who cultivate a complete and profound awareness of it.

It is Necessary for Women to be Knowledgeable in their Faith

Thus, it is imperative that women should be acquainted with their faith. They should love their faith and be devoted to it. When they reach this state, they will act upon it of their own volition, and will become a model for other women, as well as a source of propagation of Islam. Indeed, they should also understand that just as men can teach religion to men, in the same manner, women can teach religion to women. I have presented examples to prove that women can serve their religion which only reaffirms that women have been doing exactly this in the past.

Thus, when it has been established that some women have served in this way, we know that others can also do so. To say that women of earlier times were pious and virtuous, while questioning your own ability to emulate those actions, indicates a lack of resolve and courage. There are many women who ask, "If we try, can we become like A'ishah[ra]?" They should reflect on how A'ishah[ra] became A'ishah[ra]. She worked hard, showed courage and thus, became A'ishah[ra]. Today, this kind of hard work and courage is necessary to become like her[ra]. Losing courage before even attempting something can be likened to giving the example to a child of someone who has attained a master's degree and then motivating the child to also study hard so that they too can one day attain a master's. However, upon being given the example, they reply, 'How can I be capable of attaining a master's like that person! So, I am not going to even try and study.' That person whose example was narrated to the child, he had made an effort, and so he attained a master's degree. Then, what is stopping the child from putting in the effort and attaining a degree?

How did the Companions[ra] Attain High Status?

Note how the Companions of the Holy Prophet[sa] became his companions and how they attained such eminence. This was only

[accomplished] by striving. Otherwise, these were the same people who were thirsty for the blood of the Holy Prophet[sa] and would curse him. Initially, Hazrat 'Umar[ra], who became the second *Khalifa* [successor, vicegerent] after the Holy Prophet[sa], felt such severe enmity towards the Holy Prophet[sa], that he left his home with the intention of assassinating him. He met a man on the way, who asked him where he was going. He replied, "I am on my way to kill Muhammad[sa]." The man replied, "First, kill your sister and brother-in-law, who have become Muslim, then kill Muhammad[sa]." He was enraged to hear this and headed for his sister's home. Upon arriving, he saw that the door was closed, and a man was reciting the Holy Qur'ān, while his sister and brother-in-law listened within. At the time, the injunction for *purdah* had not yet been revealed. Hazrat 'Umar[ra] banged on the door and demanded it be opened. At the sound of his voice, those who were inside became fearful that he would kill them, and so refused to open the door. Hazrat 'Umar[ra] threatened to break down the door if they did not open it. At this, the Muslim, who had been reciting the Holy Qur'ān, and the brother-in-law hid inside. Only his sister came forward to open the door. Hazrat 'Umar[ra] asked her what they had been doing and whose voice had been reciting the verses. Out of fear, she attempted to stall him. He said, "Let me hear what you were reading." His sister replied, "You will be disrespectful of it, so we will not share it with you. If you kill us, so be it." He replied, "No, I promise I will not disrespect it." At this, she recited the Holy Qur'ān to him. Upon hearing this, he burst into tears and went running to the Holy Prophet[sa], the sword still gripped in his hands. The Holy Prophet[sa] saw him and asked, "'Umar, how long will this continue?" Hazrat 'Umar[ra] began to weep and said, "I left today with the intention of killing you but have become prey [to the truth] myself." So this was the original condition from where Hazrat 'Umar[ra] began. Furthermore, these were the same companions who would drink alcohol, fight amongst themselves, and suffer many vices.

However, when they accepted the Holy Prophet[sa] and strove with determination and courage for the sake of their religion, not only did they attain a high status themselves, but they also became the means for guiding others to an exalted level. They were not born '*Companions*' but were like everyone else. Except, that they took action and showed courage, and thus became Companions. Today, if

we do the same, we can become the like of those Companions. When Satan sees a person resolve to strive towards the path of religion, he sets a trap for that person, permeating his mind with doubts as to his capacity. It is like a spider's web. When the fly forcibly breaks out of one, it [the spider] weaves another one around it. In this same manner, Satan too circles about people and when he sees that his shackles are breaking, he builds more of them. One of these shackles is that when a man or a woman wishes to do a good deed, Satan creates doubt [in their minds] that 'Could I ever become such an individual? It can never be, so I shall not even try.' Even though so and so put in the effort and achieved this status. Therefore, if a person perseveres, why can they not become like others also?

Being the Wife of a Prophet is not the Only Reason for Distinction

One should not believe that Hazrat A'ishah[ra] and women like her served their faith, just because they were the wives of the Holy Prophet[sa] and there was nothing else for them to do. If they served their religion because they were the wives of a prophet, then was not Hazrat Noah's[as] wife the wife of a prophet also? Or was Lot's[as] wife not the spouse of a prophet? Yet, what did they do? They did not even accept their [husband's] prophethood and were thus ruined. If it were enough to be the wife of a prophet, then why were they not righteous? Why did they not cultivate a relationship with God and demonstrate their service to their religion? The reality is that they were ruined and destroyed because they did not follow the commandments of God Almighty, whereas the wives of our Holy Prophet[sa] attained an elevated status due to their actions. Allah Almighty states:

وَ الَّذِيْنَ جَاهَدُوْا فِيْنَا لَنَهْدِيَنَّهُمْ سُبُلَنَا ؕ

"And as for those who strive to meet Us – We will surely guide them in Our ways."

(Holy Qur'ān, Ch. 29: V. 70)

Which means, 'We open the doors for those who strive to reach Us.' Thus, those men and women who struggled in the time of the Holy Prophet[sa] – those who lost their homes for the sake of their religion; who dedicated their lives and property in the cause of Allah,

and sacrificed their own ideas, their dear ones, their families, their native land, and everything they most cherished - it was these who attained the grandest spiritual status as well as the greatest worldly rewards. Today, if men and women do the same, if they educate themselves in religion and act upon it, if they explain it to others and persuade them to practice it and care not to give precedence to anything over religion, then they can become akin to them [the Companions].

Now, I will mention some basic precepts which must be kept in mind.

Belief in the Unity of God

The primary article of faith in Islam is that God does exist, and He is One. The Holy Prophet[sa] had to endure tremendous hardships to spread this belief. Since idols were the major source of income and livelihood for Meccans, it was very difficult for them to forsake these idols.

When the Holy Prophet[sa] attempted to remonstrate them against the idols, they convened a meeting and appointed someone to approach the Holy Prophet[sa] and request him to desist. This man came to the Holy Prophet[sa] and said, "If you wish for wealth, we will gather an abundance of wealth and lay it in a heap before you. If you wish for power, we are all prepared to accept you as our ruler. If you wish for your counsel to be accepted, then from this day, we will not act upon anything without your advice. If you are suffering from some ailment, we are ready to obtain treatment for you. However, desist from speaking against the idols." The Holy Prophet[sa] replied, "If you put the sun in my right hand and the moon in my left even then I will not stop proclaiming that there is One God and He has no partner."

Clearly, this [the Oneness of God] is such an important article of faith that salvation is not possible without it. Therefore, God Almighty says that He will forgive other sins, but He will never forgive *shirk* [associating partners with Allah]. These days *shirk* is quite rampant and although Muslims do not worship idols, they have taken up the worship of graves instead. It is also *shirk* when women

say, 'I follow the religion of my husband and my relatives.' Similarly, it is also *shirk* to give offerings to a particular 'pir' [spiritual leader] if a wish of thiers is fulfilled. There are many other kinds of *shirk* which women are entangled in nowadays, despite the fact that this is dangerous. Thus, the most essential article of faith for women is that they deem God Almighty to be One and they refrain from associating anyone as His equal in attributes, actions, or names.

Belief in Angels

The second article of faith is belief in angels; that they are a creation of God Almighty. They create righteous inclinations in the hearts of human beings. Believing in them means that when a righteous inspiration arises, one should act upon it straight away so that space can be made for more righteous thoughts.

Belief that the Holy Qur'ān is the Book of God and Belief in all the Prophets

The third article of faith is the belief that the Holy Qur'ān is the Book of God and other books were revealed as well. The fourth is the belief that all prophets are true.

Resurrection after Death

The fifth is that [everyone] will be raised after death and will be called to account for their deeds. No man or woman can call themselves Muslim if they do not believe in these articles of faith. Thus, it is very important to believe in them. These then, are the articles of faith. Now, I shall speak about the responsibilities which have been declared obligatory by Islam.

Offering Salāt

The foremost of these is Salāt, the offering of which is absolutely necessary. There is considerable negligence regarding this, particularly in women, who appear very neglectful of it and tend to offer up various excuses.

For example, they say, “How can I keep my clothes clean to offer Salāt when I have a baby?” Is it so difficult to keep your clothes clean that it cannot be done? Of course not! If one is careful, then clothes can be kept clean, but if one cannot be careful, then is it not possible to have an outfit made specifically for offering Salāt? And if someone is so poor that she cannot make another outfit, even then she is not exempt from Salāt. She should merely offer it in soiled clothes. Frankly, it is human instinct for one to remain clean and pure. Therefore, if a garment becomes dirty, one should clean it. However, let us assume that there is a situation in which it cannot be cleaned, even then Salāt cannot be neglected.

There are very few women who offer Salāt and those who do offer it, do so in a strange manner. Almost as soon as they begin, they go into *rukū‘*, and then without standing up again, they sit down. They go through the procedures of Salāt so quickly, that it is incomprehensible [to me] what they might be reciting. Such women should remember that they do not stand for amusement’s sake, but for offering Salāt. Salāt is offered to demonstrate ultimate sincerity and humility in the presence of God Almighty and it is offered in order to supplicate to Him for the fulfillment of one’s needs. Is this how we behave when we implore someone for something? Not at all. Rather, such a person is shown great respect and regard and is flattered and beseeched.

Why is it then that whilst they stand in front of God Almighty ostensibly to ask for something, they lack respect in their movement; fear is not generated in their hearts, and they are void of any modesty and humility. They act instead as if God Almighty needs them, despite the fact that God is not dependent on anyone. We are all dependent upon Him. Therefore, we should be particularly respectful to Him. We should cultivate a fear of Him in our hearts and appeal to Him with extreme humility and meekness.

There are many men who also do not offer Salāt in the correct manner, however when it comes to women, most of them are such that they consider Salāt to be a burden and they wish to cast it from around their necks as soon as possible, even though Salāt is to their own advantage and not for Allah’s benefit. Thus, Salāt should be offered in

an exceptionally excellent manner.

Giving Zakat

In addition to this, the second commandment is Zakat. This means that if someone has fifty-two *tolas* [measure of weight] of silver or has saved forty rupees for a full year, then he should pay one rupee Zakat on them. This is necessary for the needy, the orphans, and the poor. Where on the one hand the obligations to God Almighty are fulfilled through the means of offering Salāt, the rights of mankind on the other hand are fulfilled through the offering of Zakat. God Almighty can grant His servants everything directly Himself, but He prefers to give through His servants so that the giver may also be deserving of reward and recompense.

Fasting

The third commandment is that of fasting. In our country, some men and women do not offer Salāt, but observe the fast. This is also an essential commandment, and it provides tremendous benefits.

Performing Hajj

The fourth commandment is that of Hajj. If one has the funds to travel, there is no danger en route, and arrangements can be made for the supervision and safety of one's spouse and children, then performing the Hajj once a lifetime is obligatory.

Service of Religion

These are the major commandments which are binding on every believing man and woman. Apart from these, there are many other ways to serve the religion. I have [already] mentioned that Muslim women have provided significant services to the faith during and after the time of the Holy Prophet[sa], to the point that they even sacrificed their lives for Islam. Just as in those days, Islam faced hardships and difficulties, it now faces such [difficulties also]. Therefore, these are the days when we need women who are willing to serve the faith.

You must be aware that just as the Holy Prophet[sa] was appointed to reform the world during his time, the Promised Messiah[as] has been appointed likewise for the present time. Now, Islam has reached such a state, where those who call themselves Muslims are responsible for inviting its condemnation.

Hazrat Jesus[as] has Passed Away

Thus, they assume out of ignorance that Hazrat Jesus[as] is sitting in the heavens and will descend to Earth at any point in time. This belief has invited much criticism against Islam. Firstly, it falsifies the Holy Qur'ān because it states that Hazrat Jesus[as] has died. Secondly, many Muslims have become Christian because of this. This is because priests present the argument that, "Jesus is alive in the heavens and you [Muslims] also believe that. Yet, your prophet has passed away and is buried in the earth. So now tell us yourself whose status is higher? You already believe that your prophet's status is higher than that of all the prophets and when Hazrat Jesus'[as] status is even higher than that, it would imply that he is God." They could not respond to this, so they left Islam and became Christian, although it is completely erroneous to believe that Hazrat Jesus[as] sits alive in the heavens. He has actually been dead for a long time.

The Meaning of the Coming of Hazrat Jesus[as]

Muslims have misunderstood the prophecy foretold by the Holy Prophet[sa] that Hazrat Jesus[as] will come again. From the prophecy they surmised the coming of the previous Hazrat Jesus[as] himself [in the flesh], whereas the Holy Prophet[sa] indicated the coming of a person with attributes like Hazrat Jesus[as].

Since the Holy Prophet[sa] had also stated that in the latter days, Muslims would become [like] Jews. Consequently, just as Hazrat Jesus[as] came for the reformation of Jews, the person who was to come for the reformation of the Muslims was to be named Jesus. Otherwise, how could the first Hazrat Jesus[as] return, for he had passed away! The Holy Qur'ān says:

مَا مُحَمَّدٌ اِلَّا رَسُوْلٌ ۚ قَدْ خَلَتْ مِنْ قَبْلِهِ الرُّسُلُ ؕ

"Muhammad is but a messenger. Verily, all Messengers have passed away before him."

(Holy Qur'ān, Ch. 3: V. 145)

Muhammad[sa] is a messenger of Allah and all the messengers before him have died. Now, either we could say that Hazrat Jesus[as] was not a messenger, but was god, and therefore he did not die. However, it is *kufr* [disbelief] to consider him god. If he was a messenger, which he truly was, then he has passed away because the Holy Qur'ān clearly states that all messengers before the Holy Prophet[sa] have died.

The Holy Qur'ān declares that Hazrat Jesus[as] is dead and whoever has passed away cannot come back to the world, as it is against Allah's practice. Why should God Almighty resurrect a dead man and bring him back to this world? God Almighty is All-Powerful. For the reformation of mankind, there is no need for Him to send a man who passed away ages ago when He can appoint a new individual.

In this world, we do not see a rich and wealthy person put aside the leftovers of one of his meals to be consumed in a meal he will have later. Indeed, the poor certainly do so. However, to say that God Almighty has set aside the same Hazrat Jesus[as] who was born several hundred years ago to fulfill a need that was to arise in the future is tantamount to declaring God to be a poor and destitute God. It is equivalent to denying that He is All-Powerful. This is because God Almighty has the ability to create not only one Jesus[as], but many. He can send them whenever the need arises.

Whenever previous prophets have passed away, He has sent more prophets to follow. He did not resurrect the same prophets from before and send them again. What then could be the reason for sending Hazrat Jesus[as] again? This is an absurd belief, which has spread among Muslims.

However, the meaning behind the prophecy of the coming of Hazrat Jesus[as] was that a man with the attributes of Jesus[as] would appear and that individual is in fact Hazrat Mirza Sahib[as] who has come and has been appointed as Hazrat Jesus[as] to reform the 'Jews'.

For the Holy Prophet[sa] declared that Muslims would become akin to the Jews.

The Mischief of this Era

The Holy Prophet[sa] has said that all the prophets since Hazrat Noah[as] have warned of the evil which will prevail at the time of the Promised Messiah[as]. Therefore, reflect upon the tremendous level of effort that will be required to fend off such a grave trouble. These days, the men of our community are striving to the best of their ability.

Women Should Pray

Yet, it is necessary that women also assist and support them in this work and pray from the depths of their heart that Islam may prosper. May God Almighty unlock people's hearts so that they may accept the truth. May sin and evil disappear from the Earth. May God's name spread in the world. May people benefit from the light which has descended from God.

Pay Chanda [Financial Sacrifice]

Apart from this, women should make financial contributions to the best of their abilities. When the Holy Prophet[sa] accepted *chanda* from men, he also accepted it from women. He did not take this *chanda* for himself. The beloved of God would never solicit anything for themselves. God Almighty Himself provides for them. Therefore, the Holy Prophet[sa] never asked for anything and neither did the prophets who came before him demand anything for themselves. Neither did the Promised Messiah[as], who God Almighty sent in these present times, desire anything for himself. Nor did those who were appointed after the Holy Prophet[sa] ask for anything. In fact, they all made appeals for the sake of the religion itself.

It is for this purpose that I am also urging those women whom God Almighty has blessed with good fortune, to contribute from their wealth for His sake. Recently, when I urged women to pay *chanda*, I was told that men do not give money to women, but they buy for them whatever they need. Consequently, how can they [the women] give

chanda? Yet, this is against the *Shariah*. It was the practice of the Holy Prophet[sa] and his blessed companions[ra] to give a portion of their wealth to women. The same should be done now. No matter how small the income, women should be given their portion from it. From this, women should then contribute in the way of God, and they should never doubt as to what can be done with such a small amount. Even if you are able to give just one penny, it should be given. God Almighty looks at sincerity, not at wealth. If someone has just one piece of bread and they give a quarter of it in the way of God, then in the sight of God Almighty, that person deserves just as much reward as a person who gives twenty-five rupees out of a hundred. Therefore, do not focus on the scarcity of your wealth. Instead, be mindful of your intentions and sincerity as those are the aspects which Allah looks at and rewards accordingly.

Preaching Among Women

Women should participate in *tabligh*. Men cannot preach to women. Therefore, this must be done by women. They should convey the teachings of Islam to women who are non-Ahmadis and are Hindus, Christians, and others. They should memorize such arguments which will be of benefit to them while engaging in *tabligh*. Even if a woman is uneducated, she should learn the basic points from her husband, father, or brother. I have seen some uneducated Ahmadis develop such an understanding of their religion that educated non-Ahmadis cannot challenge them.

One Ahmadi farmer, who is completely illiterate and by all accounts, appears to be a simple-minded person, he says, "My relatives took me to a Shia Maulvi so that he should counsel me. He asked me, 'What is the Holy Prophet's[sa] relationship to Muslims?' I said, '[He is their] father.' He then asked, 'What is the relationship of the Holy Prophet's[sa] daughter to Muslims?' I said, '[She is their] sister.' He then asked, 'How is the marriage between Mirza Sahib and a *Sayyeda* [female descendent of the Holy Prophet[sa]] valid?' I responded, 'Hazrat 'Ali[ra] married the Holy Prophet's[sa] most exceptional daughter. What do you consider that to be? Hazrat Mirza Sahib[as] was married many generations later!' The maulvi replied, 'Hazrat 'Ali[ra] was a saintly man and beloved of God.' I replied, 'We

consider Hazrat Mirza Sahib[as] to be more exalted in status than him.' To which he had no response [except for], 'Go from here. You have lost your mind.'"

There are countless other examples which show us that if someone firmly grasps the truth, no one can stand up to them. Truth is a sword and whomsoever holds it, can sever the head of their adversary. Even if a child wields it, the child will certainly leave the [the enemy] wounded. Similarly, even though an educated person will be significantly more effective against an adversary, an illiterate person who understands their religion, will inevitably triumph. Therefore, those women who are illiterate should learn some basic arguments and take advantage of every opportunity to preach to women.

Opportunities for Preaching

These days, women can take advantage of tremendous opportunities to preach [while traveling] in trains. On my way here, my friends informed me that a Christian woman had been speaking with a Muslim woman, who was unable to give the Christian woman a [satisfactory] response. I sent someone from my family to the cabin, briefly outlining that the Christian woman would initially criticize her for being Muslim, at which she should respond in such and such manner. And if she [the Christian] does not, she herself should raise such and such an objection. However, I unwittingly forgot to tell her the foremost objection Christians present and our response in turn. When she arrived there, she [the Christian woman] raised that very objection. At some point during one of the *dars* I had given to women, I had elucidated upon this response, which she [the Muslim woman] presented before the Christian woman. The Christian woman claimed, "It is written in your Holy Qur'ān that women do not have a soul. Therefore, they will not be rewarded for their deeds." She replied, "It is clearly written in the Holy Qur'ān that no believing man or woman's deeds will go to waste; rather they will be rewarded. Where did you get the notion that a woman has no soul?" The Christian woman replied, "This statement exists in the Holy Qur'ān. You apparently know nothing of it." She [the Muslim] said, "I presented a verse from the Holy Qur'ān to you, and you say that I am ignorant? If there is

such a verse in the Holy Qur'ān, please produce it." She answered, "If you come to Lucknow, I can satisfy you." To this she [the Muslim] replied, "If you come to Qadian, I can attempt to explain it to you." Her response was, "You are young, and I have grown old therefore I cannot argue with you." Upon this the Muslim woman replied, "In that case, you should certainly have prepared a response, as you have spent most of your life in religious discourse." Yet, she stayed quiet and could give no answer.

Thus, one can find ample opportunity to preach to women in a train and it is highly unlikely for a person to find so many women from various places gathered together anywhere else. If one of them finds guidance, she can spread its effect far and wide. You could also find opportunities in other's homes or at women's gatherings, which is why you should memorize the basic precepts.

Acquisition of Taqwa

Moreover, it is extremely necessary to acquire *taqwa* [love and fear of God, righteousness] because Islam does not allow us to simply engage in talk but instructs us to inculcate the fear and love of God Almighty within our hearts. This is vital, for until this is done, no deed can truly be considered a deed. Salāt cannot be deemed true Salāt, fasting cannot be deemed to be truly fasting, Zakat cannot be deemed Zakat, and Hajj cannot be deemed Hajj. Why is it so? It is because Salāt was not intended to be a method of exercise. Fasting was not intended to starve anyone, Zakat was not intended to cause monetary loss, and Hajj was not intended to force one to endure the hardships of travel. Rather, their purpose was to develop *taqwa* and righteousness. Their purpose is to save a person from evils such as jealousy, rancor, hostility, disorder, sin, and so forth, so that the person may develop *taqwa* within themselves which is the root of all virtue. The Promised Messiah[as] wrote:

Taqwa is the root of all virtue.
If this root holds firm, everything will persevere.

Thus, this extremely crucial point should be given due consideration, for no action of ours should result in God Almighty's displeasure or cause harm to any human being. Nowadays, it is more

common among women to believe it is perfectly fine to gain benefit for oneself, at the expense of causing harm to another. Yet, *taqwa* prevents one from acting this way. Women taunt and ridicule each other, find faults in each other, and eventually begin fighting. All this is contrary to the concept of *taqwa*. Women have many other similar faults, but it would take far too long if I began speaking of them, and also today my throat is hurting. I have told you the basic principle, which is that any act which leads to Allah's displeasure or causes pain or grief to any of His creatures, should be avoided. If this characteristic is developed, *taqwa* is certainly attained.

In conclusion, these are just a few points, which I have given as a form of guidance for you. If you remember these points and act accordingly, you will reap its benefits.

(Al-Fazl, October 27, 1917*)*

Listen to the Sermon, with the Intention of Acting upon it

Address to the Ladies
Delivered by Hazrat Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad, Khalifat-ul-Masih II[ra]

April 12, 1920, in Sialkot

This speech was delivered in Punjabi by Hazrat Khalifat-ul-Masih II[ra]. The editor of Al-Fazl then translated it into Urdu.

In the past few days, I have received many letters from ladies requesting that I should address them. This enthusiasm is appreciated. However, mere enthusiasm does not suffice unless it is followed by actions.

For example, a man is dying of hunger, and he is advised to eat. But if no food is given to him, how can he fill his stomach? Similarly, those ladies who listen to religious discourse but do not act upon it gain no benefit from it. In fact, they have more to fear than those ladies who have never had the opportunity to hear any religious discourse. This is because those who have not heard [such discussions] may be excused, but those who have listened to them and have failed to implement anything from them are all the more guilty and are sinners.

Generally, women consider sermons to be a form of entertainment. Just as children watch something entertaining and then forget about it soon after, so do women [pay no heed to sermons].

There is a [significant] proportion of men that listens to sermons and acts upon them, but generally speaking, ladies do not derive any benefit. For this reason, they do not excel in their morals, religion, civilization, or in their social condition and they fail to benefit in any other way.

There is no doubt that in comparison to men, women have fewer opportunities to listen to sermons, yet they do have some opportunities at least. So, if they remember and act upon all that is said to them, only then would their complaint that they are not addressed as often as men, be correct and justified. If a student memorizes his first lesson and presents it, he earns the right to request that more lessons be taught to him. However, if he does not memorize the first lesson, then teaching him more is of no use. Similarly, if they remember and act upon those points presented to them it is their right to demand for more [addresses], otherwise they have no right. Thus, instead of demanding for lectures to be given to you as they are given to the men, you should prove that you can implement what has previously been said to you. Otherwise, if you do not act upon the advice you have been given and continue to demand that you are addressed, the exhortations given to you will be forcibly given, which will be of no benefit to you. This is because the one who cannot remember the first instruction, how can they remember any other instruction? How can a person who cannot digest one piece of bread, be expected to digest two? Therefore, if you do not implement what has been explained to you already, how can one expect that you will take advantage of what is being said to you now? Thus, I would first like to emphasize to you that listening to a sermon as a form of entertainment and to dismiss all that was said therein once you are home, is equivalent to a sin. It does not benefit anyone. The purpose of giving an exhortation is that it may be remembered and acted upon.

A Good Sermon is not that in which the Audience is Praised

Oftentimes, it has been noted that women evaluate a sermon based on what is being said about them. At Jalsa [Annual Convention of the Ahmadiyya Community], women will often rate one maulvi's lecture as very good and another's not so good. Upon inquiry, it was found that the sermon in which the ladies were praised was considered superior and the one which discussed their weaknesses and their reformation was not appreciated. Hafiz Roshan Ali is an acclaimed speaker, but his sermon was regarded as unsatisfactory. Upon inquiry, it transpired that his sermon contained exhortations for women. It can be learned from this, that women appreciate only that sermon in which they are complimented and praised. If they are admonished, they

dislike it. If they are declared worthy, it will not make them so, unless they develop goodness within themselves. Similarly, they cannot be wicked just because they are called so. If they are declared good and are truly pious, then this is a matter of great satisfaction. However, if any mention is made of a weakness that is found within them, they should reform themselves and learn from it.

The Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] stated that when a person dies and the women [gather round] wailing and saying, "O brother, you were so brave that even a lion would not stand up to you." Upon this the angels strike the deceased person with a rod and ask, "Were you truly as they say?" The deceased will deny it. The angels will ask, "Why then, do they say this about you?" Similarly, when women cry out false praise, the deceased will be questioned, and they will be forced to admit that they did not embody such traits. Thus, false praise does not benefit anyone, and false condemnation does not harm anyone.

Therefore, when something is stated, it should be carefully considered as to whether that which is being explained is something that needs to be implemented by the person being addressed. If something positive is mentioned, we should act upon it. If there is something negative within us, we should rid ourselves of it. This is the purpose of these lectures. Following this instruction, I would like to briefly mention a few other points, as we are short on time and I am about to catch the ten o'clock train.

Purpose of Islam

Firstly, I would like to define the purpose of Islam. The meaning of Islam is complete submission and the meaning of *Iman* [faith] is to believe in something. When asked about their faith, all those men and women who call themselves Muslim, reply, "By the grace of Allah, we are Muslims and believers." Yet, they are unaware of the true meaning behind Islam and the meaning behind a person having faith. They believe that since their forefathers called themselves Muslims, they are also Muslims.

The Proof of being Muslim is in Complying with Allah's Commandments

No man or woman can be a believer or Muslim unless they submit to the commandments of God and the one who does not obey and submit to God's commandments has no right to be labelled a 'wise person', rather such a person is nonsensical and foolish.

> Note that when a king writes that he is the king, people accept his claim. However, if someone who is not a king claims to be one, he would be labelled as 'mad.' What is the reason for this? Only that a real king has armies and the whole workings of a monarchy [to support him], whereas a destitute person, who is shoved about in the streets has none of the markers of kingship and is thus called a madman [if he claims to be king]. We can deduce from this that when an intelligent person says something he has proof to justify his claims. However, when a lunatic says something, he offers no proof for his claims.

Therefore, any individual who says she is a believing Muslim, but does not believe in or obey the commandments of Allah, is there any difference between her and a madman? There is no difference. Such a man or woman makes claims far worse than the lunatic who claims to be a king without proof, thus rendering such a person to be far beyond a madman.

Thus, my second advice to you is to implement God's commandments; remain faithful to them and if you obey His Will then you will have the right to call yourself a Muslim and a believer. Otherwise, this claim of yours will be no better that the claim of the one who is senseless and foolhardy.

A Servant of Allah is One Who Follows His Commandments

I would now like to present before you the essence of Islam. It is composed of two aspects. Firstly, Allah says with reference to human beings:

وَ مَا خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّ وَ الْاِنْسَ اِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُوْنِ ۝

"And I have not created the Jinn and the men, but that they may worship Me."

(Holy Qur'ān, Ch. 51: V. 57)

In other words, God Almighty created human beings so they may become His true servants. Now, most people say that they are servants of God, but very few of them show signs of servitude. Had human beings become Allah's servants just because He had created them, why would Allah state, "I created the human being to become a servant." This tells us that becoming a true servant suggests another meaning. For example, how does a slave behave before his master? He stands before him, folds his arms in respect, and is ready to obey his commands. Similarly, if one is to become God's servant, then it means that one is obedient to Him. A person should always be ready to obey God's command and should continue to cultivate a close relationship with Him.

All Relations with Anyone other than God are of no Value

The greatest of all relationships is the one between God and man. Parents have a great connection [with their children], but it pales in comparison to the connection with God. A mother's connection with her child is that she carries him for nine months. When the child is born, she takes care of him. Yet the relationship with Allah is far greater than that of motherhood. This is because his mother did not create him, but Allah certainly did. She did not create those bounties with which she nourishes her child, but Allah certainly did. It is said that a mother nurses her child and therefore has a great right over him. However, I ask you, how does a mother nurse her child? Is that ability not created by Allah? Thus, if a mother gives her child milk, that milk has been created by Allah. A mother then feeds her child, but all she is required to do is to cook and serve the food to her child. When a child owes so much to their mother, imagine how much is owed to Allah, who has created the food? When the child is grown, they take care of their parents by feeding and caring for them, but Allah requires no such things. Later, the relationship with one's parents ends when the human soul departs, but the relationship with God continues even after death. A parents' relationship with their child is that of a traveler's

relationship with a tree, under which the traveler rests for a brief time. Yet, the relationship with God is such that it never ends. The relationship between man and God is great and magnificent. Alas! People care for their worldly relationships, but do not trouble themselves over their relationship with God.

Generally, women lie to please their husbands, and do not think of how it will undermine their relationship with Allah. Similarly, they become so involved in worldly affairs that when their child is born, they become so enamored with it that they become negligent in offering Salāt, and many stop offering Salāt altogether and they do not care for fasting. However, they should recognize that it is Allah Who is protecting and nourishing them while they care for and nourish their child.

Do not Give Preference to Cultural Traditions over Shariah

There are some ladies who force their husbands to carry out certain customs and rituals, stating that if they do not do so, the family's reputation will suffer. They do not wish to abandon the traditions of their forefathers. They assert that if they do not partake in such rituals, the neighbors will criticize them, but they do not care if God Almighty criticizes them. They care more for what their neighbors believe, but do not worry if God Almighty declares them nonbelievers and transgressors. They say that they cannot abandon rituals involving reciprocity, even though the reciprocity with the Eternal God alone will continue, while everything else will be left behind and man will move on to the next world. God Almighty has revealed that the Day of Judgment will be so harsh and fearsome that all relations will break away from each other, all seized with their individual worries. Thus, women should worry about that day. Most importantly form a strong relationship with God, which will benefit you in the hereafter because the worldly attachments and worldly affairs carry no weight of truth.

A Beautiful Example of our Leader, the Seal of the Prophets

When the Holy Prophet[sa] declared that there was one God and He has no partner, at that time, his relatives worshipped idols and

associated them with God. Most women may know that the guardians of shrines depend on people's donations in the form of votives for their own livelihood. Before Ahmadiyyat, some of you probably did visit these shrines and it is probable that those of you who are still weak in faith and are unaware of the teachings of Ahmadiyyat still do so. You must have noticed that their main income is from visitor's votives. Thus, Meccans were guardians of idols and they kept their idols in the Ka'aba. People would visit from far off lands to present their offerings, which the guardians would then distribute amongst themselves.

Moreover, people would come to worship idols and the Meccans would benefit by trading with them. Out of fear of starvation, they did not give up their idols. All the Holy Prophet's[sa] relatives were immersed in this. Their livelihood depended upon these idols. However, when the Holy Prophet[sa] rose to declare that God alone is worthy of worship and all other deities are false, he was not concerned for any one of his relatives. In turn, his relatives did not like his claim one bit, and they began to harass him.

One day, the Holy Prophet[sa] climbed a mountain and summoned the townspeople. When they came, he addressed them, saying, "You know that I do not lie." The people agreed. He said, "If I tell you that behind this mountain awaits a large army, ready to destroy Mecca, would you believe me?" They replied, "Yes, we will believe you." The Holy Prophet[sa] replied, "Then I say to you that Allah's wrath will befall you. Save yourselves and do not make yourself deserving of Divine punishment by associating any partner with Him." When they heard this, they called out profanities and left, calling him insane.

The Holy Prophet[sa] did not fret over these abuses but continued to discourage them from *shirk.* Consequently, the people gathered together and met with his uncle. They asked his uncle to counsel his nephew to desist from speaking against their idols. The Holy Prophet's[sa] uncle responded by asking them, how he [Holy Prophet[sa]] could give up that which he preached with such firm conviction? Following this, several of the elders assembled together

and decided that some amongst them would approach the Holy Prophet[sa] and tell him that they would accept whatever he said, so long as he desisted from speaking against their idols. Consequently, people went to the Holy Prophet[sa] and said, "We are the representatives of the Meccans, and we know you to be a good man and we know that you will not let our community be destroyed. We bring a message for you, which we wish for you to accept so that no rift develops within our community, and it can be saved from destruction." The Holy Prophet[sa] asked to be given the message. They replied, "We have decided that if you need money, we will collect it for you. If you wish to marry within an honorable family, we will find a match for you from the most noble and wealthy household. If you wish for people to follow your dictates, we will put it in writing that we will do as you say. If you wish to be a king, we will accept you as our king, but please do not say that there is only One God and no other deity exists." How did the Holy Prophet[sa] reply? He said, "If you put the sun in my right and the moon in my left hand, I will not accept your offer."

Let go of your Traditions

Yet, women worry about the reaction of their neighbors if they do not abide by traditions. Nowadays, there are fewer cultural traditions. Yet, we should question those Hindu traditions, which have been adopted by Muslims and should question their benefit. An intelligent person only does that which is beneficial. Yet, what benefits are contained within those wedding traditions we embrace? None at all. They are only followed because they are traditions of our forefathers. However, people who have faith and follow their religion, they do not care what their forefathers did. What standing do our forefathers have before the Holy Prophet[sa], who took us from infidelity and blessed us with true faith? Who could command more respect than him[sa]? It is tragic to see that people persevere with the absurd traditions of their forefathers, instead of following the Holy Prophet[sa]. As these behaviors are mainly prevalent among ladies, their situation is highly regrettable.

A Noble Example of a Sahabia[ra]

I would like to now give you an example of the condition of those women who had true faith in the Holy Prophet[sa]. After the Holy Prophet[sa] migrated to Medina having greatly suffered at the hands of Meccans, the Meccans continued to come after him and soon declared war. A battle took place approximately four miles from Medina. Although the Muslims were outnumbered by the disbelievers, they still triumphed.

The Prophet Muhammad[sa] had ordered a section of the Muslims to stand at a particular spot and to stay there under all circumstances. After the victory, some of them argued that there was no reason to continue to stand there. Their leader said that because they had been ordered to stay there under all circumstances, they should not leave their post. Others reasoned that they were only assigned to stay there during the battle and now that the enemy had fled, there was no sense in staying. Upon saying this, they left. When the fleeing enemy saw this [weakness in the Muslim defense], they once again attacked. The attack was so brutal that it created chaos amongst the Muslims, who had relaxed their guard once the enemy had fled. At this time, the Holy Prophet[sa] was injured, and his two front teeth were sacrificed. A rumor spread that the Holy Prophet[sa] had been martyred. Upon hearing this, the Muslims suffered a great deal and even the fearless Hazrat 'Umar[ra] sat with his head hung in sorrow. One of the companions of the Holy Prophet[sa] passed by and asked him what had happened. He answered by giving the news of the Holy Prophet's[sa] martyrdom. The companion replied, "If that is so, why are we sitting here? Where the Holy Prophet[sa] has gone, let us also go!" After saying this, he advanced towards the enemy and attacked with such vigor that when they found his dead body, it was covered with more than seventy wounds. The Holy Prophet[sa] was safe and sound. Why would he not be! Allah had promised him that no one would be able to kill him. Finally, he[sa] stood up and began his return journey towards Medina. Although the companions who accompanied the Holy Prophet[sa] were aware of his wellbeing, the earlier rumor of his martyrdom had reached Medina.

Women and children ran out in a frenzy. One of the

companions returned ahead of the [Muslim] army. A woman anxiously asked him regarding the condition of the Holy Prophet[sa]. As his mind was at rest, knowing of the Holy Prophet's[sa] wellbeing, he considered the question irrelevant and instead answered, "Your father has passed away." She once again inquired, "I have asked you for news of the Holy Prophet[sa]," to which he replied by saying, "Your brother has been murdered." She again asked, "I ask you, how is the Holy Prophet[sa]?" He answered, "Your husband has also passed away." The woman finally replied, "Why do you not answer my question? I only inquire about the Holy Prophet[sa]." He replied, "The Holy Prophet[sa] is alive." Upon learning this, she said, "Thank God, the Almighty. If the Holy Prophet[sa] is alive, then we care for nothing else."

If you are Faithful, Keep the Holy Prophet[sa] Foremost in Mind

Keeping this in mind, assess your own condition. If a child dies right at birth, women begin to wail, even though they understand that eventually they will pass away just as their child has passed away. The only difference is that he has passed on before she has. Yet, they continue to wail, cry, lament, and in general, cause a commotion. This is the condition of today's Muslim woman. Compare that with the Muslim woman whose father, brother, and husband were murdered, but she only says, "I do not grieve, for the Messenger of Allah[sa] is alive." This is the degree of faith, which is the hallmark of a true Muslim. Thus, if you are honest and claim to be a true Muslim, you will not care for anything other than the dictates of God Almighty and you will show this by implementing them. Do not fear what others will say, rather fear only what God will say.

Keep Away from Worshipping Graves

There are many practices that women practice which are *shirk*. They make offerings at graves, they light candles, and make vows. This is all *shirk*. To set up partners with Allah is *shirk*, a grave sin which rouses the wrath of God. For example, if someone calls a street sweeper his father in the presence of his biological father, how angry and displeased will his true father be. Similarly, to regard a lowly creature - whose status is worse than the lowest vermin compared to Allah - as your 'Provider' would deserve the wrath of

God Almighty. To seek the fulfillment of your wishes from a buried corpse, whose bones have rotted and whose body has been consumed by insects is nothing but madness! Our God is a Living God, Who provides for us and we should pray only to Him to fulfill our needs. What do we know of the character and piety of a person who is buried in that earth [at whose graves vows are made]? If he was righteous, he will curse those who pray at his grave and if he is not righteous, he will be sitting in Hell and will not be able to help anyone.

Renounce Superstitious Practices

In this same way, some women follow superstitious practices. They will tie a piece of string [upon the finger of] a sick person so that he heals. However, what is the benefit to this piece of string when even a child can break it?

Women also entertain various innovations and repulsive notions, which are of no benefit and only prove their ignorance and foolishness. Remember clearly that these superstitious arts and charms, amulets and incantations are all deception and fraud and a means for making money. These are all absurd and false practices, which should be stopped immediately. God is displeased with those who engage in such practices.

Do you not see the steady decline of Muslims? Look within your homes and amongst your relatives and reflect upon the condition of Muslims. You will find that Muslims are in debt to Hindus. What is the reason behind this? It is because the curse of God is upon them. They deserted God, so God has forsaken them. Desist from engaging in further nonsense and absurd practices within your homes by removing them altogether. The only path permitted to a Muslim and a believer is to worship One God and prostrate before Him. When God Almighty did not permit us to prostate before the Prophet Muhammad[sa], could we bow down before another? The Reformer of this age is Hazrat Masih-e-Mau'ud[as] [the Promised Messiah[as]], but we are not permitted to prostate before him, nor are we permitted to make vows or offerings at his grave. Thus, remove these practices from your households and if you have already done so, counsel others to do the

same.

Read the Translation of the Holy Qur'ān and Implement it

Remember, the Holy Qur'ān is the book of God in His own words. Respect and revere it. There is no religion without the Holy Qur'ān and there is no faith without religion and there is no salvation without faith. A person cannot receive salvation if he does not follow the Holy Qur'ān's teachings. Generally, women are not educated, but it is not necessary to be educated. If you receive a letter from a relative, you will find someone to read it for you. Similarly, the Holy Qur'ān is a letter from God to His servants. Ask your relatives to read the Holy Qur'ān to you and have your husband read it to you little by little so that you may memorize it. A lecture does not contain the exact Qur'ānic verses. For example, even though what I speak is taken from the Qur'ān, the words are my own. The grandeur which is present in the words of God can never be expressed in the words of man. I do not say that what is contained within this speech goes against the words of God, but they are still [simply] the words of a man. You should hear the message of God in His own words.

Read Arabic and learn its meaning. No matter how old you get, never shy away from learning. A *Qa'idah* [primer] has been published in Qadian, which will prove very helpful in learning the Holy Qur'ān. With its help, learn to read the Holy Qur'ān, for there is an enormous difference in reading the Holy Qur'ān yourself and listening to someone else's recitation. When listening, you only use your ears, while in reading, you will use your eyes as well, thus receiving a greater reward. Strive to read the word of God yourself. Until you can read it yourself, let your husband or children read it to you, or learn it from your neighbors. If someone is hungry or without clothes, he will ask someone to satisfy those needs without being embarrassed. When there is no shame in asking for these things, then why feel embarrassment in [asking for help] to listen to or read the words of God.

After God, do not Grant Anyone a Higher Status than the Holy Prophet[sa]

I advise you once again to believe in all the prophets of Allah. The greatest of all the prophets is the Holy Prophet[sa]. Do not rank any prophet higher than him. Out of ignorance, the Muslims in our country have conferred Hazrat Jesus[as] a greater status. They claim that Hazrat Jesus[as] is still alive, while the Holy Prophet[sa] has passed away. They go on to state that Hazrat Jesus[as] could revive the dead, but the Holy Prophet[sa] did not revive anyone. Furthermore, they believe Hazrat Jesus[as] is alive, waiting in Heaven whereas the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] is buried in the ground. Their claims concerning Hazrat Jesus[as] are wrong, for the greatest of all the messengers is Muhammad[sa]. If there was a prophet in the Heavens who could revive the dead, it would have been the Holy Prophet[sa]. But some Muslims in their ignorance ascribe such attributes to Hazrat Jesus[as], and by doing so, they accord him a higher status than the Holy Prophet[sa]. You must not make the same mistake. Hold the Holy Prophet[sa] above all other prophets. He has conferred a great deal of beneficence upon you, so believe in him and do not deem another superior to him in any regard. Invoke *Durud* on him[sa]. *Durud* is a prayer which means, 'O Allah! The Holy Prophet[sa] has shown us such benevolence that we cannot repay him. [Please] reward him Yourself.'

Belief in Life after Death

Another aspect I wish to inform you about is that you must believe in the life after death. Those who do not believe in this incline towards committing greater and greater sins. For example, crying and wailing over a person's death suggests that those who wail for their deceased do not believe they will meet them again after death. Therefore, it is very important to believe in life after death for God Almighty has enjoined it essential that we do believe in it.

The Prophet of this Age

Remember that God Almighty has sent the Promised Messiah[as] for the reformation of the world in this age. However, he was not an independent prophet, but was subservient to the Holy Prophet[sa]. For

us, he is a prophet but his relation to the Holy Prophet[sa] is that of a slave to his Master. It is essential to believe in him. We have received great beneficence from him. In this age the world has gone astray and become oblivious to religion as it had in the time of the Holy Prophet[sa]. The Promised Messiah[as] brought back religion and led us to the straight path towards God.

These were all instructions related to doctrine. I will now discuss the matter of deeds.

Observe Salāt

The first is Salāt. It is essential to adhere to it. Usually, women have a habit of making excuses. When they are young, they use their youth as an excuse and claim they will offer Salāt when they grow a little older. When they are older, they use their children as an excuse. When they are old, they claim they can hardly walk, let alone offer Salāt. Thus, their whole life is spent in making such excuses, with the majority showing indolence in offering Salāt. If they do pray, they are not regular or if they are regular, they are unaware of what they say in their Salāt. They rush through their *rukū'* and *sajdah* [positions within Salāt] and quickly finish their Salāt. The Promised Messiah[as] likened this form of Salāt to a chicken which pecks at its food. Reflect upon this. Salāt is not a form of exercise but is the worship of God Almighty. Thus, we should comprehend this and observe it wholeheartedly.

No Salāt should be missed, except during those days when such allowances are made. This is because observing Salāt is so crucial, that if you purposefully miss it even for a single day in the year, that would make you a non-believer. Thus, unless all Muslim men and women offer their Salāt five times a day, they will no longer be considered Muslims.

What should be done regarding those prayers that have been missed in the past? In that case, Allah has given the option of *tauba* [repentance]. If in the past, you have deliberately foregone Salāt, ask for His Forgiveness. Pledge to yourself that you will no longer neglect your Salāt. Whether it rains or storms, whether your clothes are clean

or soiled, whether you are engaged in an important task with no time to spare, Salāt should not be missed under any circumstances.

Firstly, it is important to wear clean clothing when observing Salāt, but if clean clothes are not readily accessible or the removing of soiled clothes carries a risk of falling ill, it is permissible to pray, even if the clothes are drenched with a child's urine! This is not to say that one should encourage a child to urinate and then observe Salāt in this manner, but if circumstances are such that clean clothes are unavailable, then soiled clothing is allowed, although it is proper for one to wash their clothes. For how much does a child even urinate? If a child drinks only milk and does not eat solid food, the *Shariah* accords that rinsing off the child's urine with water renders the clothes clean. Therefore, whatever may pass, Salāt must be observed because Salāt is never exempt under any circumstance. It is the pillar of our faith. Just as a roof cannot stay raised without a pillar, similarly faith cannot stand firm without Salāt.

Continue to Pay Zakat

After Salāt, the second commandment is that of Zakat. Zakat is $1/40^{th}$ of any assets which remain unchanged for over a year, in order to give to the poor and needy. If the government is Muslim, then the Zakat is to be handed over to it, otherwise it should be paid to whichever organization exists. As the Ahmadiyya Community, we have an organized system. Therefore, ladies should give their Zakat to the office holders.

Regarding such jewelry which is regularly worn, Zakat does not need to be paid, but if it is paid, that is very noble indeed. Zakat should be paid on the jewelry which is not worn regularly or is worn on occasion at weddings. It is permissible to pay Zakat on jewelry which is often used, but if not paid, it is not a sin. Its wear and tear is considered Zakat. In our country, women have the habit of purchasing new jewelry, which makes it incumbent upon them to pay Zakat. Paying Zakat is an important commandment, which women overlook. After the death of the Holy Prophet[sa], some people refused to pay Zakat. Hazrat Abu Bakr[ra] replied that if they did not pay their Zakat, he would go to war with them, even if it was only over [the amount of]

a rope with which camels are bound.

According to consensus, one who does not pay Zakat is not a Muslim. Assess yourselves carefully, because due to your failure to offer the Salāt, many from among you cannot be called 'Muslims.' For the rest of you, let it not be that due to your declining to pay Zakat, you are also no longer called Muslims.

Keep Your Fasts

The third commandment is that of fasting. Fasting is prescribed for you in the month of Ramadan except for those days, when women are prohibited by God to do so. You should fast the rest of the days. There is no need to further emphasize this, for although people refrain from offering Salāt, they do fast regularly. Not for God, but for show. They wake up at night and make special preparations for fasting.

Hajj Khana Ka'bah

The fourth commandment is pilgrimage to Mecca if God Almighty grants you the opportunity to do so. It requires many conditions. For example, one should be able to afford the cost; the conditions should be peaceful, and a woman must be accompanied by her husband, son, nephew, or another close relative.

Sadaqa [Alms] and Charity

The above commandments are obligatory for both a man and a woman. In addition, there is also *sadaqa* and charity. Albeit *sadaqa* and charity are not mandatory, it is still a person's duty to partake in it. We should give it to our relatives, our neighbors, the poor, or the needy. The tradition of giving *sadaqa* has declined among Ahmadis, the reason being that they consider giving *chanda* as giving *sadaqa* despite the fact that there is quite a difference between giving *chanda* for Jama'ati purposes and *sadaqa*. *Sadaqa* and charity belongs to those poor and needy, who reside near you. Religion plays no role in this. So regardless of their faith, if a person is impoverished, they should be helped. For example, if you meet a poor woman, you should not discriminate against her because she is Hindu. Rather, you should most

certainly assist her.

The above are Divine Commandments. There are other injunctions as well which relate to social behaviors.

Learn Good Manners

For example, [the injunction to] treat each other pleasantly. Do not backbite, slander, deceive others in financial dealings, and do not hold grudges or rancor in your heart against anyone. Women often engage in gossip and back biting. If they hear gossip, they do not rest until they convey it to another person. They will immediately pass on what they hear to another person, rather than stopping the person who initially spoke ill of her brother or sister. Yet, this does not happen.

Backbiting is a very bad habit. According to the Holy Qur'ān, there will be such people who will be placed in Hell solely because of this weakness. Once the Holy Prophet[sa] was en route and he came upon two graves. He stopped there and said, "God has informed me concerning the dead in these graves. They were put in Hell due to minor sins which could have been avoided. The sin of one was that he did not protect himself from the splatter of urine and the other's was that he would backbite."

Backbiting is a grave sin and must be avoided at all costs. If someone speaks ill of another, you must stop them immediately and tell them to speak to the person concerned. If you do hear something, do not convey it to the person concerned so as to avoid conflict. In the same way, we should not backbite. Do we not have enough weaknesses of our own that we find it necessary to discuss someone else's weaknesses? Instead of finding faults with others, find faults within yourself and make amends. Finding faults [of others] is of no benefit to you and only brings you closer to sin.

Worry about your own Self-Reformation

If you wish to find faults, then find them within yourself so that you may rid yourselves of them. Assess yourselves to see whether you are an irritable person, who readily instigates fights with others.

Analyze the weaknesses in your behavior and once you have found them out, strive to remove those weaknesses. Look around at your own gatherings and see how women fight and argue as if humans and animals are gathered together in the same room. Reform your habits and your morals. Wherever you go, be on your best behavior and practice good etiquette. Meet each other with affection and love; speak to each other with warmth and compassion. If someone speaks to you harshly, exercise patience and restraint and treat each other nicely.

Conclusion

This is the Islamic teaching which I have briefly put before you. Implement it so that you may become Muslims. One who does not act upon this, will have no right to call himself a Muslim.

The Injustice of Ignorant Mothers

In some cases, it has been noticed that when the father reprimands his child for not saying his Salāt or for other unruly behavior, the oblivious mother stares at the father angrily and as soon as he leaves, she hugs the child and comforts him. She utters such words which makes him think that his father is a tyrant who is harsh in matters such as Salāt. Slowly and gradually, the child loses respect for his mother on one hand and becomes disobedient to his father on the other. This leads to a point where the child does not fulfill his parents' rights and ends up as a disbeliever. In the beginning, it appears to be a minor matter, but the result of this behavior is his moral and spiritual destruction.

By nature, children are inclined to be truthful. If they cause any damage, they will answer in the affirmative if they are questioned regarding whether they really caused the damage. It is the mother who teaches him to say, "No, I did not do such and such." In this way, they make them aware that they can take advantage of speaking in a way that contradicts what actually happened.

(Nikah [Muslim marriage] sermon delivered November 20, 1920)

Address to the Ladies at Jalsa Salana

Delivered by Hazrat Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad, Khalifat-ul-Masih II[ra]

Masjid Al-Aqsa, 1921

Vast Prospects for the Progress of Mankind

Allah Almighty has vested mankind with immense potential for success. When man makes progress, he elevates himself to such a degree that God Almighty's attributes are manifested within him, and God fulfills nearly all his desires. If he desires that people worship God, people will begin to worship God in his own lifetime. If he desires that a righteous community be established, then such a community is formed within his lifetime. Upon witnessing such progress, the question arises, "Is there something exceptional about this man which enables him to reach this level? Can we attain this level as well?" Referring to this, Hazrat Muhammad[sa] has said: "I am but a man just like you. There is nothing exceptional about me. When you see how God has blessed me, you too, should strive to reach the same level."

For example, when you see someone wearing beautiful jewelry or clothes etc., you are restless until you attain it for yourself. When it is realized that you can attain the blessings which were bestowed upon the Holy Prophet[sa], and you do not acquire these blessings, then it is undoubtedly for one of two reasons. Either [you think] that Hazrat Muhammad[sa] possessed no [special] quality, or you hold Muhammad[sa] Messenger of Allah in high regard, but you do not consider yourself capable of attaining those blessings. This would then render Hazrat Muhammad's[sa] statement false, God forbid, where he declares that "I am a man just like you." For God Almighty says:

قُلْ اِنَّمَآ اَنَا بَشَرٌ مِّثْلُكُمْ

"Say, I am but a man like you."
(Holy Qur'ān: Ch. 41: V. 7)

Muhammad[sa], the Prophet of Allah was as though a representative of God who came to this world and brought a sampling of treasures from God Almighty. That is to say, he came to reveal the qualities and attributes of Allah, so that people would be inspired to strive in knowing God Almighty. Men and women have not been created without a purpose, rather God Almighty has created them for a reason. The reason is for God Almighty to reveal His Sovereignty. God is the Provider. He does not require provision for Himself; hence it was necessary to create mankind so that He might provide for them. In the same way, God is Merciful. Thus, in order to manifest His mercy, it was necessary to have oppressed [peoples].

Everyone is a Reflection of God

In short, God Almighty created people to manifest His attributes. Every single one of us is a mirror, through which Allah desires to see His reflection. Allah wished to create a mirror and He fashioned man's heart as that mirror, imprinting His own image upon it.

For example, Allah is *Rabb* [the Sustainer]. Do you also act as a sustainer? Allah is the Master; He either punishes or forgives. Do you also forgive? If we do not act likewise, then His true image is not imprinted within us. God has created all of you, so that He might manifest His attributes through you. If you do not display all these attributes, you are not fulfilling the purpose of your creation. [If that is the case then] your similitude is that of a defective mirror which does not reflect the face clearly, and so the owner discards it. God Almighty will remove such a person in exactly the same way. However, as opposed to this, the more a person becomes pious, the more God Almighty blesses him. However, when a person becomes evil, God eventually destroys him, and God values an animal more than that person.

There is a story from the time of Hazrat Noah[as] of a sparrow who laid baby birds in a nest high up in a tree. When the flood levels rose, God said, "I shall save the sparrow's babies, who are better than those wicked [people], whom I will destroy for having incurred My wrath."

What is the Purpose of Creation?

The purpose of human creation is to carry out God's commandments and manifest His attributes. Do not harbor weakness within yourself. Do not lie, for the act of lying is a mark of weakness. God has enjoined that one should take care of the poor. This means to become an exemplar of God, for He also cares for His creation. When you embody this behavior, people will look to you and see God within you. Long ago, kings would use mirrors to show their reflection to their subjects, however, these were purely acts of ignorance. God, however, reflects His Being through people. For example, Hazrat Muhammad[sa] was a reflection of God, and he manifested the image of God. Therefore, I advise you to accept God's teachings and act upon His commandments.

My second instruction is that God has accorded us a responsibility by sending us a prophet. While he did not bring a new *Shariah,* he did come to unveil the face of God to the world. The prophet's objective was to propagate the teachings of Islam to the world. Our pledge of allegiance to this prophet means that we vow to undertake his responsibilities. His job was to save people from cruelties and darkness. You will only be able to do the same if you inculcate good qualities within yourselves. I shall give you a few instructions regarding this.

Save Yourselves from Shirk

The duty of those who know God is to shun the association of partners with Him. I would like to explain the concept of S*hirk*, so that you may avoid it and save yourself from the wrath of God. Even some educated men lack proper understanding of what constitutes *Shirk*.

God Almighty says, "I forgive all sins, but I will under no circumstance, forgive the sin of associating partners with Me." Therefore, it is necessary to abstain from *Shirk*. The behaviors associated with *Shirk,* which should be avoided are [as follows]:

Firstly, do not adopt forms of homage and worship for anyone other than God. These postures of homage include bowing down

before someone, standing or bowing before someone with folded hands, prostrating or kneeling before someone. These are considered gestures of homage among all nations. If we perform these same gestures of homage before others, how will we pay homage to God? As God is the most supreme, the respect towards Him should be the greatest. Thus, each of these postures of respect should be reserved exclusively for God. If we bow down or stand before someone with clasped hands, it is *Shirk* and an enormously sinful act. The aforementioned behaviors express the utmost reverence and if performed before anyone other than God, it is *Shirk* and is forbidden. Therefore, all such acts are forbidden.

The second type of *Shirk is* to attribute Divine powers to people. Examples of this sort of *Shirk* include believing that a certain person can heal the sick, lighting oil lamps at gravesites, or loving someone to a degree which should be reserved only for God.

Observe Salāt

Observe Salāt, for one who is not regular in offering Salāt cannot attain faith. Hazrat Muhammad[sa] said, "God states, 'When a servant of mine seeks to approach Me while steadfastly observing Salāt, my servant arrives so near to me, that I begin to love him. When I love him, I become his ears by which he hears, and his eyes with which he sees, and his hands with which he grasps, and his feet with which he walks. However he uses them, it is as if it is done by Me, not by him.'" Thus, Salāt is such an excellent deed, which helps attain nearness to God. Whoever wishes to see God on the Day of Judgment should never abandon Salāt and should offer it in congregation. Those women who are unable to offer [Salāt] in congregation, should supplicate with such concentration and fervor that it should be as though they are standing before God and He is observing them. Their full attention should be towards God.

A Holy Person's Story

Once, a very pious elder began to read Salāt behind a certain *Imam* [a person who leads the prayers / leader]. As the prayer began, it occurred to the *Imam* that he could buy a bull with the two hundred

rupees he had, travel to Delhi, and sell his bull for four hundred rupees. From there, he could buy something else and go onto Aghra, where his four hundred rupees would fetch eight hundred rupees. He could then buy something in Aghra which would sell for more in Peshawar and sell it there [in Peshawar] to make sixteen hundred rupees. This situation [the *Imam's* deliberations] were revealed to the pious elder through a vision. He discontinued his Salāt behind the *Imam* and began to offer it separately. After completing his Salāt, the *Imam* reprimanded him in a harsh manner, stating, "It is a great transgression and forbidden [to break away in the middle of Salāt]!" The saint responded, "I am weak, and my legs are not very strong. I first traveled with you to Delhi. I thought, very well, if *Imam* Sahib is going, then I will go too. From there you travelled to Aghra and I still accompanied you. However, when you prepared to leave Aghra for Peshawar, I broke my Salāt so that I could offer it myself." Upon hearing this, the *Imam* was much embarrassed. Therefore, one should be careful about three things while offering Salāt:

1. To offer Salāt solely for God
2. Observe Salāt wholeheartedly
3. Along with offering the *Fardh* [obligatory] *Rak'at*, offer *Sunnah* [Blessed practice/actions of the Holy Prophet] which brings one closer to Allah. *Sunnah Rak'at* must be offered.

True recognition of God is achieved through *nawafil* [voluntary prayers]. These *nawafil* are a blessing and are for our benefit alone. An example of this divine gift is that of one visiting another with a gift for his children. He [the host] accepts it and the guest is extremely grateful that the host has accepted the gift. The host then returns the favor by presenting him [the guest] with a gift.

The purification and the benefit that Salāt provides is for none other than our own selves. In fact, God bestows us with even more rewards [as a result of our Salāt]. The most important amongst the *nawafil* prayers is *Tahajjud* [voluntary prayer observed before dawn]. *Tahajjud* is essential to overcome one's ego. Women should offer this prayer just as men do. Hazrat Muhammad[sa] has said, "When the man wakes at night, he should also awaken his wife [for the *Tahajjud* Prayer]. The one who is awake should sprinkle drops of water on the

other to wake them. Such a home is most blessed."

Remember, rewards are obtained only by enduring hardship. God Almighty has promised us Heaven, but it will not be obtained without any effort. As far as prayer is concerned, one should offer *nawafil* as well as *Fardh*. Of all the voluntary prayers, *Tahajjud* is the best. If you wake up in the middle of the night for the sake of your child, merely because you believe that when he is grown he will make you proud, can you not then wake up for the sake of God? If you awake for God, your name will last eternally and if you remain awake for one hour at night, He will bless you with everlasting life.

One of the many etiquettes of Salāt is to offer Salāt slowly. Salāt is a means through which we see God and should therefore be offered in an unhurried manner with the thought that as long as we remain engaged in observing Salāt our time in His presence is prolonged.

The Promised Messiah[as] has said: "Nowadays, the prostrations of men and women are like that of a hen pecking at its food." Thus, one of the many ways to attain Allah's blessings is to take as much time in Salāt as one can. Remember, Salāt is not a game of hide and seek you play with God, but rather a visit you pay to meet Him.

Now I will elaborate on a few more commands of *Shariah*. Apart from offering Salāt, God Almighty has ordained that if a person possesses forty rupees, he should spend one rupee from it in the way of Allah. This is Zakat and is a means of purification. Zakat is obligatory for men and women. Hazrat Muhammad[sa] greatly emphasized this. During the time of Hazrat Abu Bakr[ra], some people refused to pay Zakat. They declared that they would not pay Zakat, which led to such an uproar, that except for [those in] Medina and one other small town, many apostatized. At that time, Hazrat 'Umar[ra], who was a very brave man, counseled Hazrat Abu Bakr[ra] to use a gentle approach towards them. They would eventually concede. Hazrat Abu Bakr[ra] responded, "You are afraid that they are many and we are few. So be it, I shall go alone and fight them for the sake of Zakat. If they neglect to pay even one *raddi* [smallest coin], I shall still fight against them, for this is Allah's commandment." Take note. These people followed all the

practices which Muslims follow, but they refused one command, and they were treated as disbelievers. This [incident] highlights the significance of Zakat. Of course, any jewelry regularly worn is exempt from Zakat.

Allah has provided many means through which people can build a relationship with Him, yet doubts continue to surface in people's minds. Prayer is a means of saving oneself from such doubts. The example of prayer is like that of a treasure trove which one discovers, that has the ability to fulfill all your desires at any time. There is an old folk tale which relates the story of a giant, who gave a boy a certain token, which fulfilled all his wishes. Yet, this is just a fable. Certainly, there does exist such a treasure which will fulfill all your wishes if you choose to dip your hand inside. That treasure is God Almighty and the door to obtaining it is *Prayer*. It is possible to acquire everything through prayer. Prayer is a mighty tool which even wind and water cannot halt. We have witnessed these phenomena with our own eyes.

The Acceptance of Prayer

Once a person wrote to me that he had been trying to get married for the last six years, but to no avail. He asked me to pray for him. I prayed for him and was told that the prayer was accepted. I wrote to him [of this] and he replied that the moment he received my letter, a wealthy man from the area arrived at his home and proposed the marriage of his daughter. This shows that God listens to prayers in such a manner, that those people who know not of such things, are dumbfounded. If we need provisions, God is the Provider. If we hope that our faults remain hidden, then God's name is *Sattaar* [the One who Covers]. If we need honor, one of God's names is *Al-Mu'izz* [the Bestower of Honor]. There is nothing in this world which cannot be found in God's attributes. Since all worthy attributes belong to God, we should pray to Him by invoking the attribute which corresponds to our need. Now, I shall present some methods for acceptance of prayer.

1. A person whose income is earned unlawfully will not have his prayers accepted. Therefore, one should always maintain an honest occupation.

2. A person should pray with concentration and the conviction that God is Gracious and Merciful. Prayers will certainly be accepted if offered with concentration.
3. God Almighty says, "Invoke the attribute of mine which corresponds with your need." For example, if one feels that one's upbringing is wanting in some way, then one should pray, "O *Rabb* [Lord], purify me." When one asks for provisions, one should say, "O Provider, provide for me." When you invoke His appropriate names, God will accept your prayers in abundance.
4. If the supplicant treats others with kindness, God never rejects his prayers, because it invokes God's sense of honor. That is because He says, "When this person does not reject other peoples' requests, why would I, as the King, reject this person's prayers?"

(*Al-Fazl,* March 6, 1922)

The Initial Appeal for the Creation of Lajna Ima'illah

Delivered by Hazrat Mirza Bashir ud-din Mahmud Ahmad, Khalifat-ul-Masih II[ra]

1922

As-Salamu 'Alaikum wa Rahmatullahe wa Barakatohu. [May Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon you]

To fulfill the purpose of our creation, women need to make as much effort as men. In my view, women still lack an awareness of what Islam desires of them. How should they spend their lives to attain Allah's pleasure and inherit His blessings in the hereafter, as well as in this world?

Upon careful consideration, [it appears] that most women do not comprehend the point of whether there is anything worth doing other than their daily chores.

Only our women can counter the female enemies of Islam who attempt to spread suspicion regarding Islam and indoctrinate our children. If we are to create a spirit of sacrifice in children, that too can only be done through our mothers. In addition to their own spiritual and intellectual progress, the future advancement of the Jama'at is largely dependent upon the efforts of women. The older that children become the less impressionable they are compared to when they were young. Similarly, the reformation of women can only be done by women.

Keeping these matters in mind, I invite all those sisters, who support my ideology and accept the need for the following points, to come together and work to fulfill this purpose. If you agree with the following directives, please let me know, so that this work can be started as soon as possible.

1. It is necessary for women to come together, increase their knowledge, and then impart that knowledge to others.

2. It is necessary to establish an *Anjuman* [office in charge of administrative affairs of the Community], so that this work is regularly implemented.
3. It is necessary to create a set of rules to govern this *Anjuman,* which will be binding upon every member.
4. It is necessary that the rules and regulations are in accordance with Islam as presented by Jama‘at Ahmadiyya and that they should help in [maintaining] its stability and progress.
5. It is necessary that during conferences lectures are delivered which discuss various matters relating to Islam, particularly those concerning contemporary issues. The lectures must be written by the members of the *Anjuman* themselves in order for them to gain expertise in this way.
6. It is necessary that to increase knowledge, lectures should be presented by those who are well-versed in Islamic teachings on topics members of the *Anjuman* consider important.
7. It is necessary, that in order to establish the spirit of unity within the Jama‘at, all activities should be in accordance with and should contribute towards the advancement of the scheme set by the Khalifa of the time.
8. It is necessary, that in order to enhance the unity of the Jama‘at you fulfill your duty as a Muslim and continue to strive in the manner outlined by the Holy Qur’ān, the Holy Prophet[sa] and the Promised Messiah[as]. Be prepared to offer every kind of sacrifice for this task.
9. It is necessary to remain focused on your moral and spiritual reformation. Do not limit your attention to food, drink, and clothing. To achieve this, fully help one another and reflect upon and adopt these ways.
10. It is necessary to understand the extent of your responsibility in the upbringing of your children. Instead of raising them as neglectful, disheartened, and apathetic towards religion, raise them to be active, insightful, and able to withstand difficulties. Teach them whatever religious knowledge you have acquired and inculcate within them the spirit of love and obedience of Allah, the Holy Prophet[sa], the Promised Messiah[as] and his *Khulafa* [successors]. Instill in them the desire to forsake their lives for Islam and to live in accordance with its principles. Think of ways in which to implement this ideal and then put

them into practice.

11. It is necessary to overlook each other's faults when coming together to work. Attempt to bring a reformation in others by treating them with patience and forbearance, rather than anger and indignation which will cause dissention.
12. When a new project is launched, people will laugh at it or ridicule it, thus it is necessary to ignore their reactions. Our sisters should acquire the courage and resolve needed to tolerate the taunts or ridicule to which they will be subjected either individually or at meetings, so as to set an example for other sisters and to draw their attention towards this work.
13. It is necessary, that to render this idea effective and to ensure that it continues forever, like-minded women should be recruited. This can only proceed if every woman who is a part of the organization considers it her duty to persuade other sisters towards her point of view.
14. It is necessary, that to save this project from failure, only those sisters should be made members of the *Anjuman* who agree wholly with these ideas. At any time, if anyone should disagree with this, God forbid, she should withdraw herself willingly or be removed from this *Anjuman*.
15. It is necessary, that since the word Jama'at, does not pertain only to a select group of people, but is inclusive of young and old, poor and rich, it is fundamental that this *Anjuman* be free of the distinction of rich and poor. In fact, an effort should be made to create love and equality between the rich and the poor. The notion of harboring contempt in one's heart and regarding oneself superior should be eradicated. For despite differences in status, the reality is that all men are brothers, and all women are sisters.
16. It is necessary to devise practical methods for the service of Islam and the assistance of needy brothers and sisters. These ideas should be implemented accordingly.
17. It is necessary to pray and request for prayers, since all aid, blessings, and success comes from God Almighty.

May our Purpose be Revealed

May the true purpose of our creation be revealed to us. May

we recognize the best way to achieve that purpose and may we be blessed with the ability to employ these means in the best manner, to ensure a blissful ending. May Allah guide our progeny through His Grace, and may He continue this work according to His Will till the end of time [*Amīn*].

If you concur with these ideas and are prepared to implement the corresponding rules and regulations, which are now, and in the future, presented to and approved by the *Anjuman*, please sign this sheet of paper. Later, a signature will be taken from every sister individually, as an affirmation and a pledge to abide by these rules and regulations.

Address to the Ladies at Jalsa Salana Qadian

Delivered by Hazrat Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad, Khalifat-ul-Masih II[ra]

December 1922

Respect for Women in Islam

The religions which existed before Islam paid more attention to the reformation of men, with some of them of the opinion that women had no souls and they merely existed as a reward for men's comfort and thus would not be held accountable. This point of view can be found in many religions, with even the Jewish and Christian scriptures indicating that God created men for Himself and women for the sake of men. As the final religious teaching, Islam is the first to recognize that men and women are equal beings. As women were created for men, so were men created for women. If a woman takes care of a man, he also works to take care of her. Therefore, the old religious thinking was incorrect and was not revealed in the Holy Books, but was written by men at the time, according to their preferences. The Holy Prophet[sa] was the first to teach equality, completely revolutionizing the status of women.

The Status of Women in Arabia Before the Advent of the Holy Prophet[sa]

In those times, Arabs held the view that women had no intelligence and no right to interfere in their affairs. If a woman did try to give her opinion on their affairs, the [men] were greatly offended.

Once, Hazrat 'Umar[ra] was considering a difficulty. His wife said, "It's quite easy. Do it this way." He said, "Who are you to meddle in my affairs?" She answered, "The wives of the Holy Prophet[sa] give him advice. What is the harm if I do so?" Immediately, Hazrat 'Umar[ra] rushed to his daughter, who was married to the Holy Prophet[sa], and asked her if she advised the Holy Prophet[sa] in his affairs. She said, "Yes." Hazrat 'Umar[ra] scolded her and said, "That is

very bad. Do not do so again." When Hazrat 'Umar's[ra] paternal aunt heard of this, she admonished him, "Who are you to interfere in the affairs of the Holy Prophet's[sa] household?"

At a time when women were treated no better than cattle, the Holy Prophet[sa] himself sought their opinion and advice.

A Problem Solved by a Woman's Advice

Once the Holy Prophet[sa] had a dream in which he saw himself performing the *Umrah* [secondary pilgrimage]. It occurred to him that he should perform *Umrah* that same year. In view of harassment by the Meccans, the Medinites often could not travel to Mecca. After they heard of his dream, thousands gathered to accompany the Holy Prophet[sa]. When the Holy Prophet[sa] arrived at Mecca with a multitude of thousands, the Meccans said, "Under no circumstances, will we let you in." They felt that if they allowed Muhammad[sa], the Messenger of Allah, to enter Mecca with thousands of his followers, people would believe the Meccans to be scared and they would thus lose face. After much deliberation, it was decided that leaders from both sides would negotiate a settlement. In the end, it was determined that the Medinites [Muslims] would turn back [without performing *Umrah*] to return the following year.

The companions of the Holy Prophet[sa] were greatly saddened when the Holy Prophet[sa] agreed to the disbelievers' terms. The Holy Prophet[sa] then directed them to perform the sacrifice of the animal which they had brought with them. No one moved. After repeating his instruction three times, still the companions remained seated. Upon witnessing this, the Holy Prophet[sa] became greatly concerned, lest this act of [disobedience] bring tribulation upon the companions. Finally, he stood up and went home, where he asked one of his wives, "What should be done? Today is the first time I have instructed them, and they have not obeyed." She replied, "Say no more to them. Go straightaway and slaughter the animal you have brought for sacrifice." Consequently, he left and drew his knife upon his camel's neck. Upon seeing this, everyone immediately rose as if they wished no other should be the first to obey. In truth, they had been so heartbroken that they did not rise until they saw the Holy Prophet[sa] perform his own

sacrifice. Thus, a woman's advice solved this problem.

Women do not Realize their own Importance

It is a regrettable fact that in this day and age, women do not realize their own importance. They believe they have been created for the service of men. Whichever religion the man follows, they will follow in the same direction. They do not understand that men and women each have their own relationship with God Almighty. The way things stand, their faith is what their husband directs it to be. Thus, it is necessary that a woman should think carefully about her religion because when she stands before God, she will be unable to defend her choice to be Ahmadi simply because her husband was Ahmadi, or that she is Christian because her husband was Christian. She will be asked which religion she followed because she believed it to be true.

Women's Relationship with God

Today, I will be discussing this very topic. Regarding faith, women should remember that they have their own independent relationship with God. Thus, women can establish their own bond with God, provided their faith is of their own choosing and not of their husband's. In the past, women have been the recipients of Divine revelations, including [Hazrat] Rabia Basri[ra], [Hazrat] Mary, and the mother of Hazrat Moses[as]. God spoke to them. The woman who believes in her religion with a complete understanding will not be lead away from her faith even if the man becomes misguided. This is because the mark of distinction of the one who truly understands her religion, is that even when faced with trials and tribulations, she does not go astray. This is because when a person truly accepts her faith, she does not stray, even if the entire world seeks to turn her away.

There is no Lasting Success without Faith

Always remember that there is no consistent progress without having faith. Why is it that men have advanced in their faith to such a degree that even they are cut apart with a saw they do not give up their faith? However, because women's faith is for their husband's sake and not for the sake of Allah, they are unable to make sacrifices.

Therefore, it should be understood that no prayer, no fast, no pilgrimage, and in fact, no worship will be accepted until the woman chooses her own faith, instead of relying upon her husband's faith. If you believe that Allah has created you only for the sake of men, you cannot progress at all.

Progress of Religion through the Progress of Women

Bear in mind that no religion can advance unless its women progress. It is important that for Islam to progress, you should improve yourselves. Women are like two of the four walls of a room. If two of the walls collapse, can its ceiling remain standing? Certainly not! Thus, women are substantially important in several ways.

Everything has been Created in Pairs

The foremost of those is to do with her own existence; without women, the [human] race cannot survive. If it could continue without her, God would have created only men. Secondly, because God Almighty is One and He holds this attribute in the highest regard, therefore He has not created anything which is one or which can subsist independently of anything else. Therefore, He has created everything in pairs. Even a human being consists of two parts, the body and the soul.

Modern research shows that even trees have male and female parts. It was already written in the Holy Qur'ān that all things in the world come in pairs, so that nothing could claim to be *one*. Thus, everything is dependent on something else, except for the rare event of Adam's[as] creation, in fact, even his creation was not from a single substance, but from many different elements.

The Reason for the Creation of Men and Women

Another reason for the creation of men and women is to establish unity. God has said in the Holy Qur'ān, 'I have not created mankind and Jinn, but that they should worship me.' Since God has created men and women for the same purpose, women should also seek nearness to God. They both [man and woman] can be likened to

two bulls harnessed to a wagon, whereby both must obey their Master. This is regarding the importance of a woman in terms of her very existence.

A Wife's Influence on her Husband

Another aspect of women's importance is in the fact that women exert enormous influence over their husbands. It is often said that women are dependent [upon men], but it is true that some men fall into trouble because of women. Women control [men] by way of submissiveness. Hazrat Adam[as] was expelled from Paradise because of a woman. The Bible says that [Hazrat] Adam[as] would not obey Satan, so he [Satan] then went to Eve and she managed to convince [Hazrat] Adam[as]. This shows that even though a woman rules through the power of love and affection, however, it is the case that she exerts her rulership. We have often seen very devout men being deceived by women. We have also seen women accept Ahmadiyyat first and then persuade their husbands to join. If women are committed, then their men will be more active in serving their religion.

Occasionally, women use the power of love in dangerous ways. For example, women are often the cause behind the taking of bribes. When they pester their husbands to acquire one item or the other for them, the husbands are forced to make money in an illegal manner. This is the influence of women. Many of the world's ills are the result of men being unable to fulfill women's needs. Are we not then under the control of women? Due to them, men either lose their faith or they find religion. This effect is discernible, yet women can also exert a more covert influence. For example, when it is time to give c*handa* they begin to remind their husbands of this or that need, so that they will be deterred from giving *chanda.* The result of this is imperceptible. Just as women exert a negative influence, they can also exert a positive one.

Once, a companion [of the Holy Prophet[sa]] was expecting a guest. The man said, "What should we do [in serving him]?" His wife said, "Why do you worry? We have food for just one person, which we will serve him." The woman put their children to bed [hungry] and put the food before the guest. It was customary in Arabia that a guest

would not eat unless the hosts joined him. On some pretext, the woman extinguished the lamp and then they both sat down with the guest and made noises as if they were also eating. But these days, the majority of women would rather send their guest to hell, than let their children go hungry.

One Woman's Faith

After the Holy Prophet's[sa] death and during the last days of Hazrat Abu Bakr's[ra] *Khilafat*, the Muslims faced the Christians in a great battle. The number of Christians was far greater than the number of Muslims and the battle raged fiercely for several days. Finally, the Christians decided to make one swift attack to defeat the Muslim army. Accordingly, they launched an aggressive attack on the last day and the Muslims lost their footing. At last, Hind, who in her time as a disbeliever had removed and chewed upon the liver of Hazrat Hamza[ra], now showed great and true courage as a Muslim. When she saw the men [Muslims] retreat in battle, she rallied the women together, crying out, "Let us put them [the men] to shame. We will go out and fight!" She handed the women sticks and cudgels and they left their tents. Wherever they saw men returning from battle, they taunted them, "Now you go home and do the cooking. We will go to fight!" At this, the men were so overcome with shame, that one companion stated that being wounded from a sword was more bearable than hearing those words. The men turned back right away and attacked the enemy with such ferocity that they attained victory. This was the result of one woman's courage and resolve. Even in this day and age, women can encourage their husbands to go forth in the field of *tabligh*.

Women's Influence on Children

A quality which women possess, but men do not, is their ability to gain their children's obedience, and this is the superiority of women. Proper training of children is very important, because evil progeny humiliates and disgraces a person, whereas pious children bring honor. Do not think it is enough that you are Ahmadi. Rather it is imperative that you make your children Ahmadi as well.

I have often observed that when Muslim men marry Christian

women, as soon as the men die, the women convert their children to Christianity. For example, the state of Rampur was [once] composed of Sunnis. A Shia woman found her way among them and consequently, the state was taken over by Shias. Since childhood is a time of learning, that which a child questions and that which his mother teaches, will be indelibly marked. This can never be erased, no matter how one tries.

In the Hindu religion, children are taught to prostate before stone idols from an early age. They continue this practice when they are grown, even if they have earned their bachelor's or master's degrees. The reason for this is that whatever is learned in childhood, overrides the intellect. When we examine the proofs presented by the Holy Qur'ān, it seems astonishing that the entire world has not become Muslim. The reason that the entire world has not become Muslim, is because that which they learned from their mothers from an early age, cannot be eradicated. Thus, if a mother has no religion, it will have a very harmful effect on the child. Fathers do not have the time to sit down with their children and teach them religion and moral standards.

Women incorrectly guide their children in two different areas, one of which is religion and the other Islam.

1) Firstly, they label Ahmadis as the bad people, who have invented a new religion. They declare they will only follow what their forefathers followed.
2) Secondly, they teach their children to bow, instead of saying *As-Salamu 'Alaikum* [peace be with you]. These habits become set in children.
3) Thirdly, women turn their children away from serving their religion. Women instill such a false impression of religion in their children that they refuse to go near it.
4) Fourthly, under the guise of love, they raise their children to be idle in their actions. For example, they do not wake them up for Salāt or let them perform *wudu* [ablution] for fear of catching a cold. Thus, the children become lazy in the matter of religion despite the fact that hard work increases strength and courage. Some women do not train their children when young and so even when their children wish to accomplish something, they

are unable to do so. Faith alone can do nothing, until it is practiced. Love alone is futile. When the child is grown, he will not pray for his mother, but will berate her, saying, "If I had been made to practice this when I was a child, I would not find it so difficult to offer '*Isha* and *Tahajjud* prayers today and to carry out my other religious duties."

5) Fifthly, the man goes out [to work] and the woman does not properly care for the children. The children wander around with other children in the streets. The man leaves his children, his most precious possession, with his wife and she wrongly discharges his trust.

These are five negative impressions which a woman can leave on her children. She does not realize that their well-being is her responsibility. If a man gave his wife two hundred rupees, would she toss it to a child on the street? Certainly not! Why then does she hand over to street urchins, that [her child] which is more valuable than diamonds, rubies, pearls, and in fact is more valuable than kings?

6) The sixth bad habit mothers have is that they conceal their children's mistakes. Has anyone ever seen a mother hide her child's illness? No, because she knows that if the illness is not treated, the child will die. Yet, she hides the child's spiritual maladies. If those minor ailments which develop in childhood are not treated right away, they cannot be cured once the child is grown unless great sacrifice is involved. Yet women cover up [their children's shortcomings]. At times a child may tell a lie and the father wishes to reprimand him, but the mother will defend him and in explaining it away, will tell a lie herself. The result is that the child grows more and more corrupt.
7) Seventhly, women do not take care of their children's health, to the point that when they are adults, they are unable to undertake a task of any significance.

These are seven issues, the solution of which lies within a woman's grasp. It is not necessary to be educated to fix them. Every woman knows the basics of Islam. If women begin to teach their children the main principles of religion from a very early age, then by

the age of nine or ten, their children will develop such a sense of honor, that no matter what else they learn, they will never go astray. Women can also inculcate good morals, as opposed to the negative ones which I have related, thus preventing the child from developing any faults; that is true love. You should remember these points, that is true love. All these directives highlight your importance.

Women's Responsibilities

Until you progress, the faith cannot prosper. Our success and our sacrifice will last for at the very most twenty to twenty-five years, but if you fully understand your responsibilities, this progress will continue until the Day of Judgment. You are the teacher of our future generations. Our influence is temporary, but yours is permanent. Having understood this, you will realize that the greater burden falls upon you.

You [women] are the ones who can securely anchor Islam. You have the capacity to cut off the head of Satan and establish the ongoing progress of religion so firmly, that all the nations may gasp in wonder. In the end, it is my prayer that God Almighty may keep our Jama'at's men and women steadfast in their duties; that we discharge our obligations to the best of our ability, to become like a solid boulder, which no enemy can shatter, *Amīn*.

(*Al-Fazl,* January 22, 1923, pp. 5-7)

Three-Part Lecture
First Speech

Delivered by Hazrat Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad, Khalifat-ul-Masih II[ra]

Ladies' Jalsa Hall
February 5, 1923

Knowledge Leads to Intellectual Development

At one point during the last Jalsa, I mentioned that experts should give lectures in their respective fields to advance our general knowledge. It makes no difference whether this learning be religious or secular because intellectual development comprises of all types of knowledge. Sometimes, a person may gain standing in the religious realm, but is then disgraced because of his lack of worldly knowledge.

A Narrative

The Promised Messiah[as] narrated an account of a well-known elder. One of the King's courtiers was an admirer of this pious man. The courtier would plead with the King to pay a visit to this man, but the King ignored him. One day, upon the courtier's insistence, the King finally decided to visit this so-called pious man to ascertain just how wondrous and virtuous he truly was. Accordingly, when the King visited him, the elder thought about impressing the King. To this end, he thought it would be appropriate to give the King some advice and thus display his knowledge, thereby increasing the King's devotion towards the elder. With that in mind he began his address, "Rulers must treat their subjects fairly and should not oppress them. Among the Muslim rulers, a king named Sikander lived a thousand years before the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa]." Upon hearing this, the King's expression changed, and he realized that the man was an utter ignoramus and so the King walked out. Not only was the man destroyed by his own egotism, but he was disgraced by his ignorance of fundamental knowledge.

It is not necessary that every saintly person should know who Sikander was, but this man told a lie merely to boost his ego and display his knowledge of history, thus resulting in his abasement. Therefore, everyone at the very least, should be well informed in general knowledge, which is why I suggested that lectures be presented on various academic fields from time to time. Accordingly, members will gain knowledge whether it be religious or secular.

I had also mentioned that men are often unaware of which topics are important to women. For this reason, I proposed that a lecture covering a range of topics be presented before women so that they may decide for themselves the issues they wish to delve into. For instance, someone will long to visit Delhi, for she has never heard of cities like London or Paris, nor is she aware of their beauty or expanse. This is despite the fact that London, Paris, and Berlin are very large cities and Delhi cannot even compare with them, this woman will only wish to visit Delhi because she is unaware of what else exists. Similarly, women can only be informed once a list of the sciences is put before them. Thus, my lecture will cover the various sciences.

The Vast Implications of Knowledge

In my view, knowledge does not encompass only that which is true; rather diverse types of knowledge exist. Some scientific fields are fundamentally accurate and complete, whereas others are not, yet they are still counted as sciences. Others are being researched and developed but come under the category of 'knowledge.' Some knowledge is purely academic and is not practiced, while other [fields] are purely practical and hands on. Thus, I will cover in this address only a list of sciences, so that you can assess which ones are necessary. I will cover the sciences which are complete and those which are not, those which are academic and those which are practical.

Religious Knowledge

Before studying religious studies, it is important to understand

what exactly religion is, and the issues over which various religions have differed. Upon close study, one observes that there are three key issues which have caused disagreements. I will not cover these differences in detail, but will in fact, present the various aspects of these religions.

Most religions differ on the following three principles. Firstly, how man was created; secondly, for what purpose was he created; and thirdly, where will he go after he dies. These three issues led to differences and the birth of new religions. We will now elaborate upon the problems, which arise from these three issues.

Commonality Among Religions

In the context of emerging scientific fields another question arises. One should focus on the extent of commonality among religions. That is to say, which issues do they agree on, and from which ideologies did they emerge? This question arises because now people have distanced themselves from religion, considering it to be false. To this end, they have summed up the similarities and differences between various religions and have decided to refuse outside forces. In fact, they value morality and have done away with the need for Divine revelation. They explain the similarities based on shared truths and thus they deny the need for revelation. On the other hand, they assert that the differences between religions reflect the specific circumstances through which various nations have passed, thus excluding God completely from having revealed these religions. This is the modern research on theology and is called 'Comparative Theology.' Such are the principles applied to religions.

Following are the principles explained in some detail regarding the knowledge pertaining to religions:

1. ***Islam:*** Islam is one religion among many, and you should do your own research.
2. ***Christianity:*** After researching [the subject of] religions, one will pose the question: what is Christianity? This requires considering its sects, of which there are four:

a. ***Roman Catholics:*** Catholics believe that Peter was a disciple and successor of Hazrat Jesus[as]. History indicates that Peter lived in Rome. Catholics say that when in Rome, Peter was ordained as the successor of Hazrat Jesus[as], thus making him the caliph of Hazrat Jesus[as]. According to them, the Pope, who is the head of the Catholic clergy, is the successor and caliph of Peter. They hold that the clergy must obey the Pope, for if they do not, they do not obey Hazrat Jesus[as]. Thus, they assert that the caliphate of Hazrat Jesus[as] will be continuous.

   Now, I will not argue whether these beliefs are correct, rather I simply wish to summarize the study of Roman Catholicism. Roman Catholics also attribute some divine qualities to Hazrat Mary. When a righteous person passes away, they believe that one can pray at his or her grave. With the advancement of science, they have been able to preserve the bodies of saintly elders, and they either visit those sites or the places where the saints themselves prayed. In terms of bureaucracy, they follow the Pope. In terms of religion, they believe that their prayers will be accepted if they pray at the graves of Hazrat Mary, Hazrat Jesus[as], and the saints. They have a tradition called the Last Supper. They say that before Hazrat Jesus[as] was arrested, he had a drink of wine or grape juice and a piece of bread, which he also served to his disciples. Hazrat Jesus[as] interpreted these [items] to be his flesh and blood. Roman Catholics mimic this [analogy] and believe that bread is his flesh and wine is his blood. Roman Catholics govern a large area and follow the Christianity of the olden days.

b. ***Greek Church (Greek Orthodox):*** This church separated in the fifth century A.D. Idol worship was common among the Greeks. They do not agree with the Roman Catholic's belief that the Pope is the successor to Hazrat Jesus[as], so they broke away from the Pope. The head of the clergy is called the Patriarch and he lives in Constantinople. They view him in the same way they view the Pope. He is not regarded a successor of Hazrat Jesus[as].

c. ***Protestants:*** Protestant means to oppose and express hatred or a willingness for separation. They dissented with the

Pope and broke away from the Roman Catholics. It is their belief that each person is autonomous, and the Pope is insignificant. They have a church, which is subordinate to the king. That is the state of things in England. In other European countries, the church is considered supreme, allowing common people to have their say. They believe that it is not permissible to bow down before a cross, statue of a saint, or Hazrat Mary. They do believe in translating the Gospel into other languages, unlike the Roman Catholics, who believe that the Gospel should be read in its original language.

d. ***Unitarian:*** They believe in One God. They do not believe that Hazrat Jesus[as] is God or the son of God. Instead, they believe he was the last and the greatest prophet.

I have now explained the four main sects in Christianity. There are many other smaller sects, but these are the main four.

3. ***Judaism****:* They are the followers of Hazrat Moses[as], and they believe in the Torah. They do not believe in Hazrat Jesus[as]. They believe in the prophecy of the coming of the Messiah but refute Hazrat Jesus'[as] claim as the Messiah. Before the Messiah can come, they believe Elijah will appear from heaven. They do believe in all the Prophets up until the Prophet Malachi, and they also deem Hazrat Suleman[as] and Hazrat David[as] to be great prophets. Their religion is based on the Torah. In Judaism, there are two main sects. One is Sadducees and the other Pharisees.
   a. ***The Sadducees:*** A political and liberal sect. They believe that everyone can study the Bible, which is why they interpret the Bible according to the world's current events. Due to their political involvement and support from kings this sect has survived. In turn, kings have needed them to run their government. Kings allowed them freedom and assisted them in order that they interpret [religion] according to the [King's] wishes. In reality, this was a political sect, which to some extent, can be likened to the Ahl-e-Hadith [A Muslim sect].

b. ***The Pharisees:*** A sect akin to the Hanafi Muslims. They say it is necessary to follow the sayings of the saints and are against conquering other countries. Moreover, they are in favor of keeping their own country within its boundaries. Because the Sadducees sect was a political sect, it was wiped away along with the destruction of Judaism.

4. ***Hinduism****:* In reality, Hinduism is not a real religion. The people who were living in India before the Muslims arrived, were called Hindus. Their main sects are as follows:
   a. ***Sanatan Dharam*** is the oldest and largest sect. The long-standing sect believes in the Vedas [their holy book] and considers it to be the word of God. They believe that no other book or religious code will be revealed after Vedas, but avatars, such as Krishna and Ramchandar, will continue to reveal the knowledge contained within it. This religion is mostly based on idol worshipping. Three of their major gods are Brahma, Vishnu, and Shiva. There are several other minor deities, but the foremost have been mentioned. These are further divided into religious sects. Some consider Brahma to be the greatest, others Vishnu, and others Shiva. Brahma is the god of creation, Shiva is the god of wealth and comfort, and Vishnu is the god of death. Among these sects, there is another important sect which believes in Krishna. They believe in the Vedas, but that it alone is insufficient. Therefore, they read only the Geeta, which contains the explanations set out by Krishna. They regard the Geeta to be perfect and superior to the Vedas, which is why they are a separate sect.
   b. There is another sect, which is called Vaidanti or Vedanat. This sect believes that our reality is God. They say the world is God's contemplation. They also believe that everything is eternal. Otherwise where did it all come from? Therefore, this is not real, but a figment of God's imagination.
   c. Then there is another sect by the name of Vaam Marg. Practically speaking, they believe that spiritual advancement is dependent upon enjoyment. They are spread all over [the world] in large numbers.

d. Then there are the Arians. They do not believe in avatars, nor do they believe that God created the soul and matter. They assert that these two things have always been and will always remain eternal, that God joined them together for his own benefit, as a potter creates pottery from clay. Regarding salvation, they believe you reap what you sow in the form of your deeds, and in transmigration. That human beings will continue to return to this world to be punished for their actions. Therefore, they will never achieve eternal salvation.

5. ***Buddhism****:* Some believe this religion has the most followers. It began in India, but now most of its followers live outside with many residing in China and Japan. The founder of this faith, Buddha, was the son of a king who abandoned everything to worship God. They believe that salvation lies in abandoning all desires and freedom from wants leads to surrendering one's self. That is the hallmark of this religion. They wish to eliminate all forms of desire; therefore, they do not fast, nor do they engage in other forms of worship, believing that to be covetous. For them, this abandonment of desires leads to the dissolution of the Self, which will result in salvation.
6. ***Jainism****:* There are twenty-five million followers of this faith residing in India. They believe there is no God, rather that a few pious souls rule the world. The rest of the spirits continue to progress and may at one point achieve salvation. They believe that the human spirit has attached itself to the [human] form and when it separates from it, the spirit will attain salvation. Their belief is analogous to a thorn attached to one's clothes which can be separated. Until the form sheds from the spirit, the spirit will continue to return. These reappearances are called transmigration and is a common belief of theirs.
7. ***Zoroastrianism:*** This faith originated in Iran about five thousand years ago. Some believe it predates Hinduism. Zoroaster introduced this faith and many of the beliefs resemble those of Islam. Their religious acts include those like *wudu*, *tayammum* [ablution without water], and Salāt. They also believe in Heaven and Hell. The greatest difference between Zoroastrianism and other religions, is that they

consider the sun and fire as the greatest manifestation of god and therefore worship them. They also worship water, air, and other elements. The practical aspects of this religion are also very different from other religions. For example, Hindus cremate the dead, while Muslims, Christians, and Jews all bury their dead. Zoroastrians, or Parsi as they are also named, neither bury nor burn their dead, but feed them to vultures. For this purpose, they have a special place called the *Dokhma* or 'the tower of silence.' Those people who look after the dead there are not allowed to leave [the temple].

8. ***Sikhism:*** The founder of this religion was Guru Baba Nanak Sahib. His work and writings show that he held the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] and Hindu saints in high regard. Sikhism does not have any code of law. The religious book they follow is Garanth Sahib. They separated from Muslims, due to different viewpoints and animosity. This religion promotes morals such as bravery, truthfulness, etc. Sikhism has two major sects, Akali and Awasi. The Awasi believe in old Hindu saints, while the Akali believe Sikhism to be a new religion with no connections to Hindus. Amid the many other smaller sects of this religion, this sect happens to be most prevalent these days.
9. ***The Japanese Religion****:* The Japanese religion is called Shintoism. This has neither a religious creed, nor any law. They focus on morality and are convinced in the power of spirits. They worship the spirits of the deceased.
10. ***The Religion of Philosophy:*** This is a religion of conjecture and includes Atheists. In Europe, they are called agnostics, which means, "I do not know." This religion is based on doubt or whim.

In addition to the aforementioned religions, there are some new religions, [which are described below].

11. ***Baabi [Bahai] Religion***: They believe that a new law-bearing prophet arrived after Prophet Muhammad[sa]. The founder of this faith was named Muhammad Ali Baab and his followers are called Baabi. He was succeeded by Bahaullah. Later, the name of the religion Bahai was attributed to Bahaullah and now, the

followers are called Bahai. The followers of this religion believe that from among the progeny of Hazrat *Imam* Hussain[ra], one *Imam* disappeared, but still lives. This missing *Imam* chooses a person to be his deputy. This person serves as the representative of the *Imam* and a thorough way, or *baab*, between the *Imam* and the believers. *Baab* means door. They consider the *baab* to be innocent and free of mistakes or sin, because he reflects the *Imam Mahdi* and they believe that the *Mahdi* has knowledge of the unseen.

Muhammad Ali Baab was killed and before his death, he made out a will, appointing *Subha-e-Azal* as his successor. In fact, this was a title, which Muhammad Ali's successor, Mirza Yahya, claimed. Mirza Yahya was Bahaullah's brother. This sect opposed the Iranian government and Baab was executed on the order of the king. When the faithful and brave followers of *Subha-e-Azal* began to be executed, he became nervous and fled to Baghdad. Fearing for his life, he became a recluse. At this time, his brother Mirza Hussein Ali, took advantage of the situation and claimed the title of *Bahaullah*, to expand his movement. *Subha-e-Azal* stayed put, while Bahaullah's sect kept increasing. This sect incorporates European teachings in its religious beliefs. They are like Khawaja Sahib, who routinely inculcates the notions of educated people into Islam. Bahai's act in this very manner, where they adapt the ideas of educated people [into their faith] and add moral teachings.

12. ***The Religion of Brahma*:** The second modern faith is Brahma. This is a religion of logic, as they assert that their faith is based on logic. They do pray, but do not believe in the acceptance of prayers. In their opinion, prayer only increases love of God.
13. ***The Religion of Theosophy*:** The third modern religion is the religion of theosophy and it is a woman, who has propagated this message. Their current leader is also a woman, named Annie Besant. Their belief is that human spirits do come back, and they believe in truth, but that it is neither associated with any special belief nor with any special person. In their estimation, a person can see God not by following a certain religion, but through deliberation and rational thinking.

14. ***Unitarianism***: The fourth modern religion is Unitarianism. This is the religion of benefit. They believe all religions are false. Whatever is most advantageous is right. This religion is a branch of Atheism.
15. ***The Religion of Dev Samaj****:* The fifth modern religion is Dev Samaj. This is also an Atheist religion. The founder of this faith rejects the worship of Allah but requires that he be worshipped. He asserts that as spirits rise in status, so does their influence. This religion is an offshoot of Jainism.
16. ***Spiritualism:*** The sixth modern religion is Spiritualism. The followers of this faith profess that spirits return to this world, bringing news from the hereafter, even though the reality is that the [living] are curious to learn what happens after death.

In addition to these, there are thousands of other ancient and recent religions, but there is no trace left of them. After briefly discussing these religions, I now turn to Islam. Even though I began my discourse with Islam, I saved it for the end, as it is such a great and majestic faith.

Islamic Studies

1. ***Knowledge about Religious Tenets (Ilmul Aqai'd):***

    a. ***Belief in Allah:*** The first principle of Islamic studies is the knowledge of tenets, of which the most important is the existence of God. This is no ordinary tenet. Rather, it is victim of much debate. For example, is God visible or not? Can one meet Him or not? What would be the signs of finding Him? How does He establish a relationship with humans? How does He express His love and anger? What is our relationship with God? Thus, the subject of God brings up many other questions. Last year at Jalsa Salana, I gave a speech on this topic which lasted nine hours. Oftentimes, people do not understand the being of Allah. Then there is the tenet of His attributes, to which there are many aspects. How do God's attributes relate with one another? These [questions] all come under this topic.

b. ***Belief in Angels****:* This second topic also comprises of many parts. Do angels exist or not? If angels exist, what are they? Is there a connection with humans? If there is a connection, what is it? Up to what point can humans control this relationship and how can they develop it? Can angels confer any benefit or not? My speech on this topic has been published and the length is approximately seven to eight hours.
c. ***Belief in Revelation:*** The third topic is that of revelation and involves various aspects. How does God send his message? Meaning, is it revealed in words or in the form of dreams? If revealed in dreams, how are they interpreted and how can we recognize whether it is from God? This is a very vast subject.
d. ***Belief in Prophethood and the Messenger:*** This has several dimensions. Are the prophets who came to reform mankind, gods or men? What is their purpose? At which point, is their work complete, so they can leave? What are the signs of their authenticity? What is the effect of their lives? This subject matter is vast.
e. ***Belief in Prayer:*** This subject is also extensive. What is prayer? Are prayers accepted or not? If accepted, how so? As a whole or only partly? What are the signs of acceptance? How will we know if it has been accepted? In which words and conditions are prayers accepted? Thus, there are many aspects and questions regarding prayer.
f. ***Belief in Predestination:*** Sixth among the aspects of belief is predestination. This is a delicate but vast subject, covering various aspects. For instance, did God create man so that regardless of his choices, they are determined by God? Or, does man have free will? If man has no choice, then why is he punished? I have also given a speech on this at Jalsa Salana.
g. ***Belief in Life after Death*****:** This subject is also comprehensive, comprising of several aspects. Will a man be raised after death? If he is raised, will he embody the same form or just the spirit? If he is raised, then how? If it is only the spirit, how will it be raised? If it be the body, how will it be raised? Have those who have previously

passed on, been raised from the dead or not? Will those who die in the future, join them?

h. ***Belief in Salvation*:** Another belief concerns salvation. I have given a speech on this topic this year. In this speech, I explained the various aspects of salvation. What is salvation? Will it be achieved after death or during this life? Will the reward after death be temporary or last forever? The same goes for punishment. Does it last forever or is it for a limited time? Consequently, this covers various aspects and has been discussed in my speech.

2. ***Knowledge of the Holy Qur'ān:*** The second principle of Islamic studies is the study of the Holy Qur'ān, this being the revelation from God. The Holy Qur'ān itself is a collection of many sciences, divided into several categories:

a. Firstly, the reading and understanding of the text.
b. Secondly, is the study of the commentary. How did earlier people interpret it? There are scores of commentaries published in several volumes; one commentary comprises two hundred volumes. In short, there are hundreds of volumes with different commentaries. Many are published and many more have yet to be published.
c. The third study is that of the tenets of the Holy Qur'ān's Commentary. What points should be kept in mind, while interpreting and construing the Holy Qur'ān? This is an independent subject.
d. Then there is the study of the pronunciation of the Holy Qur'ān, which incorporates how the Prophet Muhammad[sa] recited the text, at times repeating one word seven separate ways, and in some cases, even ten different ways. This has been revealed to us through the study of recitation. Those well-versed in this science are aware that dialects vary according to tribes. The Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] allowed various Arab tribes to recite the Holy Qur'ān in their tribe's dialect for their convenience.
e. The fifth is the science of intonation. This field of study guides us on where to stop and where to prolong our

recitation when reading the Holy Qur'ān. This contains the rules of punctuation and the prolongation of sound.

f. The sixth is the study of the compilation of the Holy Qur'ān. It involves the discussion of whether or not the Holy Qur'ān was compiled during the time of the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa]. If it was transcribed in his time, was it done so in its entirety? Europeans have raised questions regarding the compilation of the Holy Qur'ān, and we can answer their criticisms when armed with this knowledge.
g. The seventh category concerns the chronology of the revelation and the arrangement of the verses of the Holy Qur'ān. The verses of the Holy Qur'ān are interspersed, but this field tells us when each verse was revealed. This is a permanent science.
h. The eighth sub-field concerns the lexicon of the Holy Qur'ān. The Holy Qur'ān itself reveals the interpretation of its text. This is also an independent science.

These are the eight fields of study regarding the Holy Qur'ān.

3. ***Science of Hadith:*** The third science within Islamic studies is that of *Hadith*, which itself contains many sub-branches.

a. Firstly, it is the *Hadith* itself. The *Hadith* are the sayings of the Prophet Muhammad[sa]. One part is called narration. For example, 'Abu Hurairah[ra] heard the Prophet Muhammad[sa] say such and such or Hazrat Abu Bakr[ra] saying, "I have heard the Prophet Muhammad[sa] relate this." Any other companion's narration would all be categorized as *Hadith*.
b. The second part is the principles of *Hadith*, which explains how the *Hadith* was written. It explains the principles and types of *Hadith*, and the reliability of *Hadith* in terms of accuracy or reliability. The *Hadith* are ranked accordingly, to adjudge their significance.
c. Another branch of this science is the *Assmaurrajal*, meaning the biographical analysis of narrators. This deals with the value assigned to the narrator/transmitter in terms of his reliability, memory, and whether he ever met [the Holy Prophet[sa]]. Therefore, the background of these

narrators is always much debated, thus affecting the authenticity of the *Hadith*.

d. The fourth category concerns the history of *Hadith*. This tells us of how the intention of recording *Hadith* came about and the time period in which the compilation of *Hadith* began. Compilers [of *Hadith*] discuss *Hadith* and the developments thereof.
e. The fifth sub-field is the knowledge of the commentary of *Hadith*. Similar to the Holy Qur'ān's commentary, a commentary also encompasses the *Hadith*.
f. The sixth part is the study of fabricated *Hadith*. Though this is covered in the *Assmaurrijal*, some people consider it to be separate study and compile fabricated *Hadith*.

4. ***Fiqh [Islamic Jurisprudence]:*** Another science within Islamic studies is that of Fiqh, which can be categorized into many sub-sciences.

a. One is Fiqh itself which deals with the manners and etiquette of performing w*udu,* Salāt, Zakat, Hajj, fasting, *Nikah*, in addition to matters concerning financial dealings and inheritance. These have been separately outlined in various *Hadith* but are compiled under the heading of Fiqh. There are several subsections within this category.
b. One is *Usul al-Fiqh* which deals with methodologies of jurisprudence. In other words, how was its foundation laid. This will further elicit dissenting views. Some suggest that it be based on the Qur'ān. Others would like to consider logic or intellect, and when grammatical considerations are taken into account differences will be sure to arise. In short, *Usul al-Fiqh* will thrash out the various methods of evolving jurisprudence. There are four major schools of thought on Fiqh*:* the Hanafi, the Shafi'i, the Maliki, and the Hanbali.
    i. The Hanafi School primarily emphasizes *ijtehad* i.e. independent interpretation of the Holy Qur'ān and accepts only that which can be proven by intellect. They do not give much weight to *Hadith*. They forget that the Holy Prophet Muhammad's[sa]

understanding was most superior. This is their current state, although previously, people did follow the Holy Qur'ān as well the *Hadith*. *Imam* Abu Hanifa was one of the *Aulia Allah* [friends of Allah, referring to Muslim saints].

ii. The Shafi'i is more inclined towards intellect.

iii. The Maliki School also emphasizes intellect, but compared to the Shafi'i School, gives more weight to the *Hadith*. *Imam* Malik's *Kitabal-Mawatta* is an authentic book.

iv. Compared to the others, *Imam* Janbal emphasizes *Hadith* the most.

v. The fifth sect is that of *Ahl-e-Hadith*. They only follow the *Hadith* and do not rely on intellect. They deem even a weak *Hadith* to be superior. Whereas, the reality is that it should be supported by the Holy Qur'ān, meaning that it should not contradict the Holy Qur'ān, nor should it be rejected by intellect.

c. The third science related to Fiqh is that of fatwa i.e., edicts. Advantage is taken of these edicts which various scholars issue regarding important matters.

5. ***Israr-e-Shariah [Secrets of Shariah]:*** This explains why we pray or fast. In short, *Israr-e-Shariah* explains the underlying grounds for *Shariah*. It also includes the extent to which *Israr-e-Shariah* can be understood or explained.

6. ***Usul-e-Shariah [Principles of Shariah]:*** It deals with the foundations of *Shariah;* meaning was this knowledge revealed by God or was it revealed by the Messenger's insight into those principles? To what extent should they be revealed and to what extent is an explanation permitted? In other words, in explaining the principles of Shariah, how much authority is vested in the Messenger and how much is left to others?

7. ***Dissension among Religious Faiths:*** This deals with the types of disagreements between various Islamic sects. What are the doctrinal differences among those sects? For instance, the Sunni sect includes Hanafis, Malikis, Hanbalis, and the Shafi'is. Secondly there are Shias. The greatest disagreement between the Sunnis and Shias is over *Khilafat*, which leads to further arguments over whether *Khilafat* even exists. If there is

Khilafat, to what extent should one believe in the [institution] and will it be by election or by birthright?

The second disagreement regarding the Holy Qur'ān is whether it was recorded as revealed or whether the thoughts and text were inspired? In this framework the question arises as to the matter of Divine attributes. Can God speak or does he communicate in a different manner?

The third disagreement concerns whether the Messenger has any right before Divine command?

These principles which lead to disagreement between the believers and non-believers of *Khulafa* are worth considering.

a. ***Kharijites:*** They believe there was no *Khilafat* after the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] and instead, there should have been a Parliament. In their opinion, sin inevitably leads to hell and there will be no intercession. The basis for their beliefs is that it was an error, God forbid, to appoint a *Khalifa* after the [demise of the] Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa]. Kharijites emerged during the time of Hazrat 'Ali[ra] *Karam Allah Wajhahu* [May God exalt his face].

b. ***Motazili Sect:*** 'Umar Bin Ameer founded this sect. He felt that human beings should use the intelligence granted them by God. They deny predestination and verbal revelation.

c. ***Shia:*** They believe that an *Imam* is chosen from among the *Ummah*. That right belonged to the progeny of the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa]. After the Holy Prophet[sa], Hazrat 'Ali[ra] and his children were due this right. This sect is particularly against the *Khulafa*, and God forbid, dubs them as thugs.

d. ***Naturee Sect:*** They wish to adapt Islam to European teachings. It is a grave error to modify God's word to fit in with man's knowledge. They apparently feel that there should be no distinction between God's word and God's work. However, when the two are assessed, they adapt to man's word, rather than God's word. This sect resembles the Motazili sect.

e. ***Ahl-e-Qur'ān (people of the Holy Qur'ān):*** They say the Messenger's role is that of a postman and is of no significant importance. Thus, they reject the *Hadith* and

look for their answers within the Holy Qur'ān. For this reason, some will determine the number of *raka'at* in Salāt to be two and some consider it three.

These are the key features of the aforementioned sects. I will not go into further detail concerning the validity of their arguments.

f. ***Ahmadiyyat - the true Islam:*** You must understand the following facts regarding Ahmadiyyat. Firstly, what was the Promised Messiah's[as] claim? Did he or did he not claim prophethood? Also, could there be a prophet after the Messenger of Allah[sa]? Secondly, the question arises as to whether [his] claim is that of the Promised Messiah[as]. Within the context of his claim, one then asks whether or not Jesus[as], son of Mary, died? If he did die, will the Messiah come from among his *ummah*? If he did not die, will the same Jesus[as], son of Mary, reappear? If he does reappear, how will it affect Hazrat Muhammad's[sa] prophethood? Thirdly, what is the purpose of Ahmadiyyat? Was there a need for this movement and did the coming of Ahmadiyyat fulfill this need? The next issue worth pondering over is whether the Promised Messiah[as] was a Prophet or a Messenger. Did he nurture those very characteristics present in the prophets or messengers of God or did he meet the criteria of authenticity established for the prophets? What are those criteria?

   Then there is the science of prophecy and the truth regarding prophecy. What is a prophecy? What type of prophecies did the other prophets present and what type did the Promised Messiah[as] present? We must then consider what type of relationship the Promised Messiah's[as] Jama'at had with previous sects. A recent point of contention is whether *Khilafat* will be established after Promised Messiah[as] or will a Parliament be established, as proposed by the Kharjites? Is the system in place for the future progress of Ahmadiyyat and what would be the individual responsibilities in this regard?

g. ***Sufism:*** Sufism is the eighth sect. Various people have defined Sufism in different ways. Some interpret it as the

purification of the heart and others view it in other ways. The general opinion is that it concerns the purification of the heart: how to develop an attachment and grow near to Allah. Many great *aulia* [saints] have passed away. Secondly, there is the history of Sufism. When did it start, and who started it? What was their purpose and what did they do? What changes took place in Sufism in the past? Thirdly, there is the matter of the various sects of Sufism. This delves into whether there are differences among these sects and if so, what are their dissimilarities? Within this sect, different movements have formed, such as Qadri, Chishti, Suharwardi, and Naqshbandi. There is no fundamental difference, but they do differ in some respects. These differences revolve primarily around spiritual exercises. It appears they have absorbed the practices of their particular regions as well as using those remedies in medical healing which they witnessed in their own culture, just as doctors use their own methods. For example, some may prescribe Quinine for fever and others may use purgatives. In addition to their larger sects, there are several smaller ones. In Sufism, there is a sect called Mulaeheda which has abolished *Shariah.* They assert that they have reached their destination or something along those lines. They argue that if a person traveling in a boat has reached the riverbank, should he disembark or stay in the boat? They deceive people by claiming such absurdities.

h. ***Malamati Sect:*** They too are corrupted. In reality, they are not immoral, but they believe hypocrisy or pretense leads to destruction. To counter this, they indulge in such activities, which will disparage their name. For example, they will go and sleep in a brothel house and offer *Tahajjud* prayers there. However, this way is fraught with danger. By adopting such behaviors, people are ruined. In believing that they are safeguarding their ego, they often end up entangled in various vices. The reality is that the outcome is often tragic.

8. ***Knowledge of Judgment****:* This deals with judgments over matters of dispute. For example, this covers the recording of witness' statements, its cross examination, evaluating the

witness's testimony, and assessing the judge's knowledge, familiarity [of the case], *taqwa*, and piety, etc. The second part to this institution is the history of justice. How was this institution developed and who were the notable Muslim judges from history?

9. ***Knowledge of the Rules of Inheritance:*** Though the rules of inheritance are included in Fiqh, it is also an independent science, as it affects politics and the nation.
10. ***Knowledge of Prayers and Remembrance of Allah:*** This outlines the timings and what to recite when engaged in prayers, as well as the remembrance of Allah.
11. ***Ilm Us Sair:*** This study covers the way of life of the companions of Prophets and other pious elders.
12. ***Moral Philosophy:*** This explains how to rid oneself of damaging habits and behaviors while adopting a good character and good manners. This [science] also reveals the causes behind moral diseases in human beings and why these are considered diseases.
13. ***Kalam [word or speech]***: This study explains how to prove Islam's superiority over other religions and how to establish the principles of Islam through argument. Within the *kalam* branch is the science of debate, which explains the failure of doctrines supported by those religions that oppose Islam. For example, highlighting the errors of the Christian belief in the Trinity and the notion that God inhabits a human form. Or, that Hindu beliefs are erroneous. This study of debate has two parts. One part is refuting the opposite party with arguments. The second deals with the principles of *kalam* which defines the criterion of truth and the ways in which to confront the opposition. The science of *kalam* is comprised of the above principles.
14. ***Islamic Politics***: What is the system of government? What is the relationship between citizens and government? What are the rights of the government over citizens and vice versa? This is a vast subject. How should the government govern and what is its relationship with other governments.

These are the fourteen main sciences, and if one combines the smaller branches, the number becomes sizeable. I will explain secular knowledge next week, *In Sha' Allah* [God willing].

The Second Speech

Delivered by Hazrat Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad, Khalifat-ul-Masih II[ra]

Ladies' Jalsa Hall
February 11, 1923

Last week, I delivered a speech on the various religious sciences and briefly outlined them. Within each heading, I related the issues discussed therein and the truth regarding them. I did not go into the details of each science, but merely wished to provide enough detail to differentiate between each category. I will do the same today. Providing more details would take us beyond the scope of this speech.

Today, I will describe the several types and sub-classifications of the secular sciences. Within each category, I will also relate the subdivisions and which issues are a point of contention. I had said this before and I repeat it again today, that not all sciences are meant to be valid. Certain aspects may be nonsense, but they still fall under the category of a science. Earlier, when I discussed religions, (I will say religions, however the only true religion is Islam), I mentioned Hinduism and other religions, although my intention was not to suggest that they also lead man to God. There is only one religion which leads to God and that religion is Islam. Nonetheless, to understand the beauty and excellence of Islam, one should have a brief understanding of other religions.

Secular Sciences

Likewise, when I describe the secular sciences, it will not imply that each one is truly a science, but rather, some regard it as such. Just as comparing Hindu beliefs to Islam is meant to show the

weakness and errors of the Hindu faith, it is necessary to be aware of ignorant practices to corroborate the absurdity of such sciences, and accordingly keep our distance from them. Now, I will enumerate the various secular sciences.

1. ***Linguistics [Philogy]:*** The first of all secular sciences, which is also the foundation or basis of all sciences is the knowledge of language. Without knowing a language, man is unable to communicate his thoughts to others. This study does not include the methods of communication. It is divided into three further subtypes.
   a. ***Spoken language:*** The first is the language communicated through spoken word. This is created by the motions of the mouth and perceived by listening through one's ears, just as I am speaking to you now and you are listening. This is called *taqreeri* or spoken language.
   b. ***Written Language***: The second type is to present in writing one's meaning and opinion. We convey the meanings of our spoken words through the signs and symbols which represent them. As you already know, we can present our verbal communication through writing.
   c. ***Communication through Signals*:** One form of communication is through signals where there is no speech or writing involved but is like the telegraph. The sender of a telegraph generates a number of symbols which are deciphered by the recipient. For example, one tap may represent one letter, while two taps may represent another. Through these symbols, one can interpret messages sent across hundreds of miles. In ancient times, people sent messages written as shapes or animals. For example, a dog may mean one thing, a lion another. This language, or hieroglyphs as it is called, was used in Egypt and people could decipher its meanings.
   d. ***Sign language:*** Sign language is used by those who are mute. They can communicate their thoughts through signs. In wars, they would use small flags or mirrors. A mute person can indicate his hunger or thirst [through sign language] or can indicate his wish to sleep by touching his head and closing his eyes. We can see these symbols. Sign language

can accomplish great feats. The telegraph is based solely on symbols. How can a message travel from Lahore to Batala? Yet, the telegraph can spread news not only to Batala, but to London and the rest of the world. As I indicated earlier, armies make use of this [language] through mirrors or flags. Soldiers use light to signal to their comrades the strength of their enemy or the need for food and ammunition. Thus, great feats can be accomplished with sign language. If communication was limited to speech or writing, much of our work would come to a standstill.

Thus, the study of linguistics is foremost and the [following] three forms of knowledge [related to communication] fall into distinct categories. In classifying these sciences, linguistics comes first, and the following three studies fall within its scope comprising of a vast sphere of knowledge. There are other disciplines of linguistics, and although related to the languages, they are catalogued in a separate classification, hence I will denote them separately.

2. ***Eloquence:*** This is related to language and is more than just the expression of thought. For example, a child may mispronounce the word, 'bread', or a non-native speaker or Englishman may ask for food in an incorrect manner, but still convey the message. Linguistics merely studies whether the thoughts have been expressed, but the study of eloquence goes beyond this to discuss three aspects of speech. There exist so many types of conversation. [The first is] veracity of speech, in other words, is the dialogue true or false? Next is attributing the speech to an individual, and [finally], the organization of speech, which covers how one can say something in a more impactful manner. For example, a person may be called brave, but calling him 'lion heart' creates a greater impact, as the lion is extremely brave. Thus, eloquence includes the use of similes and metaphors in discussion. Another example is describing someone as 'fuming with rage' which is more effective than merely describing someone as 'angry.' In this way, the addition of a different word changes the effect. The study of eloquence includes a discussion on beautifying speech. By studying this science, one's written and spoken communication can be improved. When a person is praised for giving a great speech or writing well, this praise is

borne from drawing upon this science. Thus, eloquence includes all the aforementioned points.

3. ***Lexicon:*** The third science is Lexicon, or the meaning of words, and is quite an extensive study. We all converse, so for example, if someone tells us that he is suffering, not everyone is able to understand the measure of his suffering, but lexicon explains its appropriate usage. When used appropriately in its context, the listener will be able to immediately understand. Lexicon encompasses the meanings of all words and though related to linguistics, is now an independent science in itself.
4. ***Written Communication:*** The fourth science is written communication or letter writing. It teaches how best to express one's thoughts in writing. There is a difference between writing a letter and writing a book. The author of a book addresses his book to everyone. Whereas a letter is addressed to one person and the recipient acknowledges that the letter is addressed only to him, as if they were speaking face to face. Similar to other studies, this is an independent and extensive science, which has progressed a great deal in modern times. Many illustrious colleges have been established to teach writing and written communication. There are several types of written communication. How traders should write letters in comparison to how officers and their subordinates should write. Schools and colleges have been created with the purpose of teaching effective letter writing and observing etiquette, keeping in mind the forms of address and the discernment of ranks [one addresses in a letter].
5. ***Journalism:*** The fifth science is Journalism, which is its English name. In Arabic, it is called *sahafat*. This is another considerably vast science. It is nonexistent in our country, but there are many great institutions teaching journalism in Europe and America. This study can be further categorized. For example, writing the headline of the newspaper, the selection and organization of the news, choosing a headline to impact readers, while also conveying the main gist of the essay, and narrating an incident to serve one's purpose. For example, if Zaid and Bakr have a fight, Zaid's friend will describe the incident to portray him to be the victim, while Bakr's friends will display him as the victim. In short, it is a great science encompassing several areas, one of

which largely deals with publishing a useful and effective paper, reflecting public opinion while also molding it. There is also another classification of journalism, covering religious newspapers, business/financial, those associated with a particular organization, and others with political aims.

6. ***Satire and Humor:*** The sixth area of knowledge within language is that of satire and humor. It discusses ways to push satire to perfection, while assuring the language and writing remain superior. Humor should make everyone burst into laughter. Within this field, people who reach prominence use satire in such a way that it has an immediate impact. Similarly, telling jokes is also a talent. One person relates a joke and the listeners are unable to control their laughter. Hence, this is also an independent study and speakers make particular use of this device.
7. ***Story writing:*** The seventh category is that of story writing. It has two branches, one of which is writing short stories and other is writing novels. These are further differentiated into short stories and novels divided into different genres. The purpose of storytelling is to leave a distinct impression upon the reader. There are several types of stories and novels, including romance, mystery, those which end tragically, and those which end happily. The requirement for writing short stories is not necessarily applicable when writing a novel. Some people write novels, while others write stories and tales.
8. ***Oration:*** The eighth type of study is oration, which is also an independent science. This is the art of giving speeches or lectures. This study teaches the orator to speak, to capture the attention of the audience and impart such influence and power that even those with opposing views are convinced. It also teaches how to arrange the subject matter and how to imbue power and inspiration within a speech.
9. ***Essay writing:*** The ninth category is what the English refer to as essay writing, and in our language, is referred to as *Jawab Mazmoon.* Along with journalism, this is another field which covers various sentiments and emotions. For example, when one writes about love, one will describe the feelings and experiences related to love. It will discuss the factors which augment its effects and its consequences. If one is writing about hatred, one

would describe it in such a way so as to reveal the whole scope of this emotion.

10. ***Conjugation and Syntax:*** The tenth form of knowledge relates to language. *Sarf* or conjugation means the inflection of words in their individual capacity and the knowledge of tenses. For example, 'eat' is one word, from which the words, 'ate', 'eats', and 'eaten' are derived. The science of conjugation tells us how these words are derived and the impact of this change upon the meaning and form of the word. It also indicates the singular, plural, masculine, and feminine forms of the words.

    Syntax explains the meaning of words when put together. It lays down the rules of arrangements and composition of sentences, such as which word comes first, and which word is placed last. How does such arrangement affect the meaning of the sentence? For instance, the difference between, 'I ate bread' and 'bread I ate'. Syntax will tell us which of these sentences is correct. Each language will have a separate set of rules for the arrangement of words. One can speak his mother tongue, or native language, correctly but cannot speak a foreign language properly without understanding their syntax, therefore it is essential to be aware of syntax. In our country, even an illiterate female farmworker will never say 'bread I ate.' Rather she will say it as, 'I ate bread'. However, one born abroad, such as an Englishman or an Arab or an Iranian, will surely say it incorrectly, unless he understands syntax. In the Arabic language, syntax indicates the meaning and effect of punctuation marks which replaces and functions as words.

11. ***Education****:* The eleventh science related to language is education. Education is the science of teaching others. It is not the same as giving a lecture, which is intended to convince others. The purpose of education is to impart one's own knowledge. Education has many aspects and can be divided into various categories. This has become an independent science.
12. ***Poetry:*** The twelfth category is that of poetry and it studies the motivation behind creating poetry, the beauty therein, and the various types of poetry.
13. ***Prosody*****:** The thirteenth study is prosody. This is the study of a poem's meter and rhythm. This also explains whether the poem is a *ghazal* [Middle Eastern or Indian lyrical poem] or a *rubayee*

[quatrain], etc. With this knowledge, one can tell whether a poem has the correct rhythm. Once rhythm is understood, one can learn to write poetry.

14. ***Advertising:*** The fourteenth field of study encompassed within language is advertising. There are several types and branches of this study within this field. In Europe and America, there are academic institutions which teach the purpose, execution, and methods of marketing. Here [in our country], people advertise and expect purchase orders the same day, but in Europe and America, a large amount of money is spent on advertising. So much so, that at times, more money is spent on marketing than in reinvestment in the business itself. This form of knowledge discusses the labelling of and placement of images in an advertisement. Thus, marketing is a special field and experts charge huge fees for generating advertisements.
15. ***Music:*** The fifteenth category is music. This teaches the art of singing, by raising or lowering the sound of one's voice and harmonizing it with musical instruments. By imbuing happiness, sorrow and grief, courage, and resolve in one's song. Music can arouse emotions. A good singer can persuade a miser to give up all his money or induce one to cowardice or inspire bravery. This is a special and delicate form of art, which can arouse emotions solely by raising or lowering the pitch of one's voice. Due to some shortcomings, Islam does not allow it.
16. ***Drama:*** The sixteenth science is that of Drama. Drama is enacting [the scripts written for actors]. The actor will perform the role as indicated in the script, whether it be a king, a minister, or a doctor. When enacted, the play leaves an impression. There are several aspects to this. Watching a play is more interesting compared to reading a book, in which some parts may seem dull. The dramaturg is cognizant of the fact that the dramas enacted on stage should be captivating and inspired; and that there should be no cause for an insipid or weak [performance]. I have not given lengthy descriptions of these sciences, as they require a longer amount of time. I have only briefly introduced each science as it came to mind.

17. ***Diet and Nutrition:*** The seventeenth science is diet. This science reveals what an edible diet is and what diets are wholesome and what are unhealthy. This also covers the most suitable diet for a hot or cold climate; and recommends the best diet to combat illness while keeping in mind relevant factors and the diet's effects on various organs. For example, what is the recommended diet for a patient with the infirmity of the mind, the heart, or stomach. This study covers these aspects in great detail, while also encompassing the drinks and various syrups or extracts used when one is healthy or when one is ill. For certain ailments, spring water is useful, as are oils, such as fish oil. This is a very detailed science and applies various remedies from different countries regarding food and drink during medical illness or wellness.
18. ***Sewing and designing clothes:*** In reality, this art deals with how to arrange lace or clothes to make them look attractive. Europe has made great advances in this field and have opened schools and colleges, whose graduates and experts in this field receive good salaries. This field also covers the study of complimentary colors and color matching, as well as which applique looks best with which color, where the hem should fall, and the design of the suit. This field therefore covers a broad range of [design elements].
19. ***Cutting:*** This is related to the previous field of study which has made much progress. There are separate teaching centers which teach the art of cutting fabric so as to finish the suit beautifully and cut it in a way so that the least amount of fabric is wasted.
20. ***Cooking:*** The twentieth category is cooking, which is not limited to kneading dough, but goes beyond and includes many practical aspects. An expert should be well versed in diet/nutrition. For example, a cook should be aware of the extent to which a certain food should be cooked so that it stays healthy, is easy to digest, and maintains its nutritive value. He needs to balance the nutritious aspects of diet with the taste and flavor, keeping in mind what each ingredient brings to the dish. This field encourages experiments in mixing flavors, such as sour and sweet, to create a new flavor combination and then judges

whether the result is appetizing to the eater. It is necessary to learn each aspect, in particular the characteristics and effects of the diet. This field of study is particularly important for women.

21. ***Raising Children:*** The twenty-first category is raising children. This study is particularly important and applies specifically to women as compared to men. The mother is more intimately involved in the education and training of the children. The initial education and training takes place in the lap of the mother. This study discusses the extent to which one should be lenient or firm with children, how to protect them from weaknesses and damaging habits, how to inculcate good habits, and how to inspire forbearance and strength. Thus, it covers all the fundamentals of physical and moral training, as well as the development of children. In Europe and America, this science is taught as an independent subject.
22. ***Medicine****:* The twenty-second field of study is medicine, which is an extensive subject, solely because everyone falls ill and needs treatment. There are countless ailments, and as people become involved in medical research this science continues to expand. There are two aspects of medicine, one related to diagnosing illnesses and the other with treating them. Gradually, each of these divisions also began to expand. The field of medicine can be divided into several sub-fields.
    a. One is Greek Medicine (*Tib Yoünani*). Greece is part of Europe, and the heart of their medicinal practice is researching how various remedies affect [the human body] and then treating diseases with the appropriate remedy. For example, there is a remedy which cleanses the body of phlegm. When that condition arises, it is prescribed. For example, *banafsha* [an herb] will be prescribed at that time.
    b. Another type of medical healing is Ayurvedic. Greek medicine and Ayurvedic medicine differ, for Ayurvedic is an Indian form of medicine, relying heavily on *Kushtas* [preparation of heavy metals]. They believe it is beneficial to extract the essence from the elements. There are many aspects over which the two types of medicine differ, but here I have outlined the general differences.

c. Hydropathy is another type of medicine, whereby all ailments are cured with water, sometimes by making the patient drink water and at other times, by bathing him. Then, there are many ways to bathe a person, sometimes in the form of sprinkling water upon them, at times soaking a towel in hot or cold water to clean the body and occasionally, giving a full bath. Thus, they treat all ailments with water.
d. Another practice involves curing ailments through rays of sunlight. When the sunlight combines with distinct colors, new sensations and feelings are born. The practitioners of this medicine use red, green, or other colored glass bottles filled with water, and use them as proper medicine. This practice utilizes a variety of methods. Sometimes, they make the patient sit in sunlight to treat his illness.
e. One type of medical healing is one in which electricity is applied to treat disease. Different instruments have been developed for different ailments. For example, if one has a sore throat, then a specific instrument will be applied to deliver electricity to eliminate the pain. If it is joint pain, that too will be treated with electricity. This science has developed considerably.
f. Homeopathy (*Ilaj bilmisl*) is another branch of medicine. Homeopaths believe that since birth man has been beset by various illnesses, but he has been taught a remedy which is beneficial and will cure those diseases. If a minute dosage of the root of an illness is given, it may cure the same illness. For example, opium causes constipation while minute amounts of the same drug can relieve constipation. They have chemically analyzed the effects of everything. For example, Quinine is the extract from a plant. This plant is also found in Bengal, but people do not know about it.
g. *Babokali* is another form of medicine which argues that the human body is made up of twelve salts. They have chemically analyzed the blood and believe that the treatment should correlate with the disease, and to this end there is a vaccine and a serum. For example, if one

is bitten by a rabid dog, the vaccine is prepared from the toxin. The serum is the substance [immunoglobulin] produced in the body during an illness to counter it. It is then extracted, preserved, and used for patients with that disease.

h. One type of medical practice is auto transfusion, a remedy which involves healing with one's own blood. When the patient arrives, they treat him with his blood.
i. *Hypnotherapy* is another type of medicine, where the patient is treated with hypnotic suggestion and not with drugs. The hypnotist emanates something from within which affects the patient. This practice at times swells in numbers and at times has few followers.

23. ***Mathematics:*** Mathematics is of two types; one is by numbers [Arithmetic] and the other by letters which is also called Algebra. Letters are calculated in the latter. Some things which cannot be calculated through arithmetic can be calculated through Algebra.

Geometry is another branch of mathematics which determines the relationships between points, circles, lines, as well as the values of angles. Great problems can be solved by studying lines and this is of immense importance in the field of architecture. Another category within this field is Trigonometry which is the knowledge of triangles. This encompasses the relationships between [sides and angles] of triangles. Then, there is Logarithms which makes lengthy numerical operations easier to perform by assigning a lower arbitrary number to which a base must be raised to yield a given number. To describe this field of knowledge would require a lengthy amount of time and since even a summary would not suffice, I have only given the names of the subjects.

24. ***History:*** History is the description of previous human events and can be divided into five categories: political, the history of science, religious, national, and military history. Political history deals with the political past of a nation by looking at the historical events and the causes of political changes. For example, if a nation invaded another country in such and such a year and was defeated. [History] will also analyze the state of their internal administrations. What was the relationship between the sovereign and the public? The history of sciences deals with

the progress of science through time and the evolution of newer forms of knowledge. National history discusses the origin of a nation, its tribes, how it is geographically divided, how far it spread its borders, and the changes wrought over time. Military history deals with the military changes within a nation. This branch of history differs from political history. Political history deals with matters of administration, whereas military history is concerned with aspects of bravery or lack thereof, strong or weak military strategies, advancements in military needs and equipment.

History is also associated with other subjects, the latter of which are its own branches, such as the philosophy of history. This deals with the rules governing the recording of history, the advantages thereof, the principles when recording historical accounts, the factors a historian considers, and the discussion of progress, advancement, and circumstances within the field of history. The third category within this field is the source of history, which draws information from the industries, traditions, religion, beliefs, and customs of a nation. This enables a historian to discover their history through a variety of means.

25. ***Geography:*** This field analyzes the world's current natural features, the location of rivers and mountains, etc. There are five types of geography. The first is that which deals with townships. The second is political geography, which deals with the political significance of a mountain, river, or city and their effect on the neighboring cities. This also discusses whether one country is occupying another and whether the political circumstances are favorable or unfavorable. Another branch is economic geography which discusses the country's domestic produce and imports and exports. For example, India produces wheat and cotton which is exported to Europe, America, and other countries. Another branch is environmental geography which studies what rain is, why dew is formed, and how hail or snow is created. Another branch is Cartography which includes mapmaking.
26. ***Architecture****:* Architecture can be divided into three studies. The first study deals with the construction of the building, which can be further divided into several categories. It explains how foundations are laid, which construction material should be used in relation to the elevation of the land, how to ensure the building

stands against natural disasters, earthquakes, lightening, etc. This field is considerably vast with special engineering colleges established for this purpose. The second study deals with the history of architecture. How did it evolve? The third type compares the architecture of various nations. For example, if Indian and Arab architecture are compared, what are their individual styles, how do they differ and which is better, how has architecture progressed in other countries and how do they stand up against each other, and what has each nation learned from other nations. The history of architecture is quite extensive and very interesting.

27. ***Sculpture:*** This is the art of chiseling rock to create statues of humans, animals, and other objects. This has two fields; one is sculpture itself and other is the history of sculpture. The latter deals with how various nations advanced within this field and how they contended with each other to make further progress.
28. ***Painting:*** This has three aspects: the art of painting, the history of painting, and the philosophy of art. The art of painting discusses what is needed to paint, such as which materials are needed and what should be considered when creating an inspiring and beautiful painting. This field of study is quite extensive and very special. A painter can express human feelings and emotions, painting in such a way that pain, pleasure and sorrow are depicted. When a gifted painter captures the ephemeral nature of the world, the image is imprinted in one's mind. Poets capture feelings and emotions in words, but painters express this through paintings.

    The history of paintings deals with the advancements made in this form of art. How painting was introduced in various nations and the innovations which followed. This field of study has made such progress in this age that one is left in awe. The philosophy of painting deals with the truth and purpose behind that painting.
29. ***Photography:*** This is in fact, one form of painting, which can also be divided into the taking of photos and the history of photography. The taking of photos instructs one on the equipment needed to take a photograph, the principles of photography, and the basic components of a picture. Whereas the

history of photography explains how the field of photography began and evolved over time.

30. ***Industry:*** The field of industry itself, encompasses a wide scope of areas, which I cannot cover in detail, but I will name a few, such as carpentry, metallurgy, brass work, etc. In addition to covering other types of industries, [this field of study] also includes the history of industry.

Entertainment

31. ***Recreation:*** The Urdu word for this topic is *lahw-o-la'ab,* which has a harsh connotation and is not well received. Yet, as I stated before, some consider this sort of foolishness to be a field of study. The British call this subject 'amusement', or something which creates a feeling of delight. This can be divided into two categories. One is indoor recreation, which can be enjoyed within the home and the other is outdoor recreation, which is enjoyed outside the home. The latter discusses the impact sports have on various parts of the human body, how to increase muscle strength, and its effect on the heart, brain, and lungs. Besides these two, there is a third branch of this science which is not highly regarded in our culture but is considered an art form in British culture and that is dancing. Through dancing, certain parts of the human body are trained to perform specific movements.

    Ventriloquism is another form of entertainment, where a person projects his voice so that it appears to come from below when it really comes from above, from in front, behind, left, or right. Some people are frightened by this illusion because projecting voices from in front or behind, from far or near, triggers certain feelings. Another variation of altering one's voice is mimicking the sounds of animals. Hunters take great advantage of this. The animals believe the sound is coming from among them and so gather around it. The fifth form of recreation is illusion. Illusionists use various techniques to make things appear real. For example, they may create the illusion of a snake or lion or other similar scenes. The sixth is tricks by the hand. They trick people. Here they move their hands so quickly that it is illusory, and this play usually involves cards. The seventh

form is puzzles, which can be both verbal or tangible. For example, a tangible puzzle might be unlocking metallic rings from a stick.

Anthropology and Sociology

32. ***Anthropology:*** This study deals with the man's condition in ancient times. For example, did they go naked, or did they wear clothing and if so, what type of clothing? This science researches similar matters within ancient times. One subtype of this science is linguistic anthropology, which discusses whether ancient humans expressed their thoughts through sign language or through words. Related to this is the study of coins, which involves the discovery of what previously occurred by analyzing excavated coins. A third subject is architecture which studies ancient buildings and within this subject another discipline studies ancient archaeological monuments.
33. ***Sociology:*** The thirty-third field, sociology, is an important discipline and discusses various aspects.
    a. What rights does the Government or the king owe the people?
    b. The people's duties and obligations, meaning which rules should they obey and what rights does the Government owe them?
    c. The people's rights towards one another, meaning between man and man, brother and brother.
    d. The rights of parents. In other words, what rights do parents have over their children? This argues whether a parent has the right to physically punish his child and if so, to what extent. It also discusses the way in which parents should treat their children and the behavior children should adopt.
    e. Men's rights over women. What rights do men have over women?
    f. Ways to improve the next generation. This question also addresses how to raise strong children with high morals.
    g. An employer and employee's rights towards each other. To what extent is an employee bound [to the employer] and what portion of an employer's wealth can an

employee be apportioned. This is widely debated as the subject of investors and employee's relationships and rights is extensive. Great problems and riots have resulted from being unable to protect or not understand these rights. These days, the political party primarily comprised of workers, or the Labor party, has gained popularity.

34. ***Politics:*** There are many branches of politics. The main ones are:

a. The government's rights and authority over employees and employee's rights.
b. The government's limitations, or its impact on a country's freedom and the role of its monarchy.
c. The types of government, which can be divided into several kinds.
    i. Absolute monarchy: Where the king has unlimited powers.
    ii. Limited monarchy: The government does not have absolute power. The sovereign cannot act without the approval of his subjects.
    iii. Governor's Rule: Governing by the current leader.
    iv. Autocracy: in which one person rules. It also goes by the name of *Shahi Government*.
    v. Democracy: Where the people choose the government. Included in this discussion are the pros and cons of a government chosen by the common man.
    vi. Technocracy: Here the governing is left to academics and intellectuals.
    vii. Plutocracy: Some people believe that since the rich suffer the most during a revolution, they deserve the right to rule. Then there is the additional discourse over whether this is even advantageous or not.
    viii. Republic: Here, the control of government is decentralized, such as is followed by the government of Russia. Each state has its own government. The role of the sovereign is to oversee that the individual states do not fight each other and if an outside enemy attacks, the country can defend

itself. It would be as if Qadian had its own government, Delhi its own, and Lahore its own, so that each township would rule independently.

ix. Government of Sheiks [Sheikhdom]: Wise, experienced men rule the government. The Arabs have implemented this system of governing, and they elect people over the age of forty.

x. Islamic Government: This system differs from the aforementioned types of government, because it contains elements of each, e.g., limited monarchy, absolute monarchy, governorship, autocracy, plutocracy, sheikhdom etc. This is the best form of government as it has gathered aspects from all the other forms of governments.

Some discussion points follow:

a. The relationship between government and religion and the extent to which each should defer to the other.
b. The role of women in government.
c. How are colonies established, and what is their relationship with other countries?
d. The relationships between kings.
e. International relations i.e., relationships between countries and the resolution of conflicts between countries. Disputes are resolved by selecting representatives and judgments are passed according to international law.
f. Whether vicegerents are considered rulers themselves. In actuality, they are not true rulers, but viceroys. For example, Iraq has a king, but the real rule lies with the League of Nations, who has passed it onto the British.
g. The allocation of borders between countries and the rules dictating such boundaries. This considers the people who live in the area and the disadvantages of allocating a portion of the land to another nation.
h. Another point of discussion is the running of government affairs. There are several aspects to this:

i. One type of governance is centralized. Some argue whether authority should be distributed among others. For example, Punjab, Burma, UP, etc. [individual states], were given authority and governors, commissioners, and deputy commissioners were appointed. Others are in favor of a centralized government. Hence, there are two viewpoints regarding administrative government, one which favors centralized control and another which favors decentralized control.
ii. Another aspect discusses the police's authority.
iii. The Department of Intelligence, also known as CID, which carries out investigations.
iv. The Forestry department, which is concerned with the protection of forests and determines the extent of deforestation and conversion into agricultural land.
v. The Department of Education categorizes education, whether it should be free or at cost, how it should be organized, should it be voluntary or mandatory. This can be further divided into women's education, men's education, and the learning of various disciplines.
vi. The Medical Association is comprised of medical doctors and veterinarians. There is also a department for preventative medicine which deals with sources and means for medical education.
vii. Treasury Department.
viii. The administration, for example, the deputy commissioner and district officials, etc.
ix. Judicial system which handles the appointments of judges and lawyers.
x. The Department of Treasury deals with issues related to farmers.
xi. Postal service
xii. Department of Irrigation
xiii. The Department of Railways

xiv. The Anti-Narcotics Department, which oversees alcohol and other narcotics, so that they are not illegally made or sold.

xv. Department of Architecture

xvi. Department of Currency and Mint. This department handles the minting of coins. It determines how much currency should be generated and the required proportions of coins and currency notes, as well as the handling of counterfeit currency.

xvii. The Registry department registers necessary documents related to business transactions and other important transactions, to avoid potential conflicts.

xviii. The Commerce department determines ways to increase trade and expand the number of exports to other countries.

xix. The Armed Forces is an extensive field, which determines the need for various types of ammunition, the number and caliber of soldiers, etc.

xx. Department of Foreign Relations analyzes interactions with foreign countries.

xxi. The Department of Health is responsible for ensuring a healthy public; maintaining cleanliness in urban and rural areas and keeping the environment clean so that future generations are healthy.

xxii. The Legislative department develops laws to organize and manage the affairs of the countries, while also keeping track of good and bad legislation.

xxiii. The Oceanic department administers affairs related to the ocean and oversees that the rules related to the oceans are adhered to.

xxiv. Meteorology department predicts and measures rain and snow fall. Even though this department is not well developed at this time, it is very useful.

xxv. The Aviation department deals with the atmospheric sciences related to airplanes and the required procedures.

xxvi. The Revenue department determines the tax on income.

xxvii. The Department of Customs has a considerable scope and determines the tax on imported items.

xxviii. The Department of Statistics gathers statistics such as those related to agriculture e.g. the percentage of cultivated land, railways statistics, such as number of passengers and profits accumulated. This department is of great value.

xxix. The Port Authority deals with issues pertaining to oceans and ports, such as how wide ports should be built, so that ships dock easily.

xxx. The Historical Preservation Society searches for and maintains old buildings.

xxxi. Ministries

xxxii. Public Relations is responsible for making the public aware of the actions taken by the government and preventing propaganda from being spread to foreign countries.

xxxiii. The Department of History is responsible for recording the government's historical accounts.

xxxiv. Trade and Industry is responsible for protecting the country's industries and implementing schemes for its progress.

xxxv. The Agriculture Department plans and develops schemes for agricultural development, provides equipment and seeds, and educates and encourages agricultural research.

xxxvi. The Department of Land Survey is responsible for measuring plots of land and arranging revenue and monitoring regulations related to it.

xxxvii. Municipality is the appointment and overseeing of local councils.

Thus, a government can only run efficiently when it is divided into such departments. Lack of attention to this led to the decline of Asian governments. We have not yet established this many departments here [in our country]. Thus, a government can only run when these departments are

formed. Each of these departments can be expounded upon in great detail.

Principles of Education and Knowledge of Mathematics

35. ***Principles of Education:*** This deals with the following:

a. Principles of education, that is, how to teach.
b. Which subjects should be taught in schools, the curriculum, and allotment of time for each subject. For example, how much time should be devoted to history or geography per week.
c. Administration of schools.
d. Method of teaching.
e. History of education.
f. Organization of educational schooling, for example, how to establish primary and secondary education, as well as schools and colleges.
g. Training teachers and increasing their numbers.
h. The degree of physical education [within the school system].
i. Moral and religious education. Should religious education be taught separately or alongside [secular education]? If yes, what arrangements should be made for students of different faiths?
j. Construction of schools. Another extensive subject is the construction of schools, the building of which requires a certain skill, because it influences the student's mind and health in specific ways.

36. ***Accounting****:* The keeping of accounts.

37. ***Auditing:*** This teaches one how to check account ledgers.

38. ***Cartography:*** Drawing up maps.

39. ***Engineering:*** This has many branches, an example of which is, calculating the weight a [structural] arch can bear.

40. ***Customs and Traditions:*** This is an independent field of study which can be further divided into the philosophy of customs and traditions, the history of traditions, etc.

41. ***Fashion:*** This discusses the history of fashion, various nation's ethnic dress, the necessary tools entailed, adapting fashion according to medical and seasonal requirements, and many other matters.
42. ***Criminology:*** This field can be further separated into the root causes behind crime, the methods used to reform criminals, the purpose and extent to which one should be punished, and the forms and effectiveness of punishments.
43. ***Economics:*** This is the study of the economic status of a country: how to manage assets and the consequences of extravagance or miserliness. The currency exchange rate is also included in this discussion, though nowadays, this is a cause for some disquiet among people. Then there is another branch within this which involves the minting of coins. Additionally, this field studies the system of loans and how to expand domestic and international trade. In context of trade, there are several issues: different methods of trade, free trade, taxing additional or equal tariffs on products of trade. Another aspect of trade relates to its control and organization. How employers and employees should work together to everyone's best advantage. The question then arises as to whether strikes are permissible and if so, who oversees the provision of food during the strike?
    a. Other issues include the rights and responsibilities of owners of factories regarding their closure e.g. can a factory owner fire all his employees and close the factory? Regarding laborer's rights, are they permitted to demand their rights, and to what extent? How are the poor to be provided for? Other topics covered are the landowner's rights, the need for unified factory workers, the building of safe factories to ensure their worker's health and safety, the establishment of the company itself, the influence its money will wield, tax and its limitations, the influence of insurance, profit sharing and the division thereof, and the increase and decrease of costs. The above are all aspects of economics.

44. ***Logic:*** This involves putting two facts together to result in the correct answer. It is taught like this. For example, they say all men are animals. Zaid is a man, which means Zaid is an animal. In this way, they deduce the correct answer from a variety of sources. There are two types of logic: one is to conclude by reasoning from specific examples and the other is to draw a general conclusion by drawing from specific cases.
45. ***Philosophy:*** This aims to understand the truth of all things. It discusses matter, time, how the universe functions, the creation of matter, God, [etc.]. The essence of philosophy can be summarized by three questions: what, why and how. In turn, philosophy teaches the answers to these questions and specifically, those regarding the issues of matter and time.
46. ***Psychology:*** This field discusses those factors which shape a man and how they are born, as well as the difference between human and animal minds. This type of discussion is covered here.
47. ***Morality:*** This study deals with good and bad morals.
48. ***Laws of Nature:*** What is the cause behind sudden cold or sudden heat? Why do such changes occur?
49. ***Storytelling***
50. ***Study of Languages:*** How does language evolve? Regarding this, the following are considered:
    a. The comparison of languages: e.g., comparing Arabic/Sanskrit, Arabic/English, Persian/Arabic, etc. Comparing words which are similar, and which are not.
    b. Analyzing each language to uncover the most complete one.
    c. The evolution of each language.
51. ***Astronomy:*** The study of stars, the planet's rotation, the reasoning behind their orbit, and their impact on earth, the speed and orbits of planets, the effect the planet's rotation has on the planets themselves, and the various types of planets. This also discusses the creation of the planets and the moon, as well as light and its properties.

(Jalsa Salana, Lajna Ima'illah, February 11, 1923)

The Third Speech

Delivered by Hazrat Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad, Khalifat-ul-Masih II[ra]

Ladies' Jalsa Hall
March 5, 1923

I have previously outlined fifty [one] subjects and will now describe the remaining few.

Science and Geology

52. ***Physics:*** This is one subject within a larger field of study, which in our country is called Science. It can be further divided into subjects, one of which is Physics. This subject discusses the generation of sound, the description of light, heat and cold, liquids etc. It also describes electricity, magnetism, atoms, properties and states of matter, and individual properties of solid, liquid, and gas. Any and all machines invented are due to this knowledge. This field discusses liquids, gas, sound, light, magnetism, atoms, and the composition of matter. Inventions are conceived based upon these studies. For example, railroad engines were created based upon the knowledge of heat energy, how this energy is created, and how it is stopped. It was the knowledge [of physics] which taught that light is created from electricity and how electricity is conducted from one place to another. Additionally, studying this subject unearthed the fact that electricity could travel without cables. No action is wasted. Then there is the study of molecules, which led to the invention of the injection. Thus, machines run based upon the concepts of gas, liquid, and magnetism, all of which are studied within this field and the foundation of so many inventions. One aspect of physics is practical application, meaning how to best utilize theoretical knowledge, while another aspect is mechanical, i.e., what is the effect of machines.

53. ***Chemistry:*** This is the same knowledge which in the past, was called Alchemy. It studies the combination of two elements to

produce a third. In other words, this field researches how combining different components creates a new substance and accordingly, how its qualities change. Medicine is based upon this science. For example, when Quinine combines with other things, what is its effect? The foundation of medicine and the achievements of science depend upon chemistry. Chemistry involves theory and application. One aspect of this subject involves the physical movements of the body, while another aspect relates to human life, or the elements of blood. Additionally, there are two more branches which study botanicals and minerals.

54. ***Geology:*** This is also called the study of earth strata and has many branches. One branch of this science is proving quite beneficial to the world, i.e., the study of earthquakes. Earthquakes cause great devastation in the world. The 1905 earthquake in Punjab was responsible for the loss of nearly twenty thousand people. This field can predict the occurrence of earthquakes, so we can avoid destruction. Within the study of earthquakes, the movement of the earth is also analyzed, which does not refer to ordinary movements, but rather those movements which are akin to the shuddering of the human body. By studying this data, we can discover the Earth's extraordinary movements. In Shimla [city in northern India], there is an instrument which can determine where and at what distance an earthquake occurred. Japan has made great progress in this field. This instrument is called a 'telegraph', [Seismograph] and an Ahmadi, by the name of Muhammad Yusuf, is also a member of the team, which oversees its use. I have seen this instrument and as soon as you enter the room, the needle begins to move, detecting the minutest of movements.

The second area of this knowledge is related to the Earth's strata. By analyzing the different strata, it determines when they were formed. For example, Europe was formed much later, while Asia was formed [early enough] that it could support human life. This field encompasses the study of mines. When were metals, such as iron, formed and were they all created from the same matter? Coal and diamonds are the same substance, with the only difference being that of age. This difference has made the price of one so expensive, that a few ounces are worth hundreds and

thousands of rupees, while the other can be bought at ten, twenty or fifty rupees for several tons, yet the substance is the very same. This field additionally encompasses *Ilmul wazn* i.e., the knowledge of measurements, as well as the examination of the effects of air, light, moisture, and cold, and the study of rain and wind. Geology also analyzes diverse types of rocks, from ordinary rocks to diamonds, evaluates their qualities, and estimates their value.

Origins of Life and Biology

55. ***Primatology:*** This discusses how life was first created. The discussion begins with the creation of the first life form and leads to the origin of plant life. Did mangos or guavas exist from the very beginning or did other earlier fruits evolve into mangos and guavas? Botanical experts say that previously, there existed only slight greenery, which continued to develop and eventually nurtured branches. From the succession of branches, grew hundreds of thousands of varieties of plants. This is akin to Adam's progeny, which once was the same, but some traveled here and others traveled there, some grew fair and others grew dark. In this same way, it is argued that at the time of origin, there was just a seed. This field of study also discusses animals which can be divided into two broad categories: vertebrate, signifying 'with backbone,' and invertebrate, which means 'without backbone.' Lastly, the stages of evolution and how they developed are discussed.
56. ***Biology:*** This is the study of living beings and physical life is discussed under this science. For example, the movement of the hand proves that there is life within, while the soul is a separate entity. The body contains life, and this life is comprised of distinct stages. This field of study is a delicate and extensive one, which will be discussed under evolution. How does one animal evolve into another? Evolutionary scientists argue that man gradually evolved from an insect. Some evolved into apes and others grew to be other animals and finally, they evolved into man. This is a new science, and they argue that from the insect, originated the ape; from the ape, originated another animal; and from this, finally man was born. This science is known as

evolution. Though it is debatable, evolutionary experts have at least taken advantage of this theory by deriving larger things from smaller things. For example, they have bred larger pumpkins and different flavored foods as well. Previously, the grape had only one flavor, but with advancements, they have changed it. Botany has derived tremendous benefit from this science. This field also encompasses genetics. For example, what qualities and habits does a son inherit from his father? How does one family continue to pass its unique traits onto its progeny?

57. ***The Study of Nations****:* What is the relationship between different nations and to what extent are they different and distinct? In one way, all people are the same, because they have all descended from Adam, but due to migration to different areas of the world and numerous ways of life, differences have developed. European mentalities are specifically their own, whereas the capacities of Asians are different from those living in Africa. Then there is a clear difference between those who live in the plains and those who live in the mountains. This is caused by climate and civilization, which can even alter the texture of one's skin and the shape of one's bones. Scientific experts can look at one bone and tell what country the person is from. Therefore, this is an extensive field, and it continues to progress day by day.

The Study of Plants and Animals

58. ***Botany:*** This field has also progressed greatly, and it discusses the characteristics of plants. Are they living or non-living? Do they hear and see? Are they or are they not aware of their surroundings? Do they have the power of control? Are they influenced by happiness and sorrow? Finally, how do we find the answers to these questions? One great expert in this field is an Indian Bengali, Dr. Bose. He went to Europe and proved through his experiments that plants are sensitive and living. Like humans, they feel various emotions. They listen, they move, they feel anger, and they communicate. They also feel embarrassed and experience hunger and thirst.

This field of study also covers the discussion of diverse types of plants. What types of plants exist in different climates and which countries do not support specific plants? What are their diseases and what are their causes and remedies? Additionally, this discipline delves into analytical research, where each plant is studied individually to see if it is related to another. Sometimes, one plant does not resemble another, but they are related. For example, sugar cane and reed are said to belong to the same genus, but over time, the reed evolved into sugar cane.

59. ***Zoology:*** This study researches animals and their behavior. What is the function of the minutest of organisms? What is the condition of vertebrates? Furthermore, based upon geographical distribution, which animals are found in certain countries, and which are not and why? In short, this is an extensive study.
60. ***Mining Engineering:*** This has several aspects, including the exploration of mines and the provision of light and circulation of air inside. In previous times, people could not advance, for they were unaware of what treasures the ground held. Mining engineering has progressed considerably. Mines are below ground and providing air and light requires special knowledge, so that miners can work comfortably and avoid accidental death by fire or suffocation.
61. ***The Study of Elements:*** The details of metals and elements are discussed here.

The Study of Surgery, Medications, and Diseases

62. ***Dissection:*** This deals with knowledge and details of the human and animal body. Dissection is the only means to locate and describe blood vessels and specific bones. This method of study assists tremendously in treatment and has made considerable progress, with new skills emerging to advance this field.
63. ***Pharmacology:*** What are the effects of medicines? What is the result of using low or high dosage and how do they work in particular illnesses? This is a rapidly expanding independent discipline.

64. ***Orthopedics****:* This field of study is concerned with the mending of bones, cutting skin, and transplanting animal bones into humans.
65. ***Nursing:*** This discipline explains how to care for a patient. Patients are usually irritable, and nursing teaches when to be firm and when to show compassion based upon a patient's behavior. At times there may be anger within, but it is necessary to show kindness and compassion, and at other times it is imperative to show sternness and severity. Once, a doctor expressed anger at a patient in my presence and I questioned his behavior. He advised that it was necessary. For these reasons, this is a separate discipline and has become a profession in itself. Nurses work separately, for they assist patients with their mobility, sit them up, feed them, and in general, care for them in the best way.
66. ***Gynecology****:* Previously, this was not considered a separate field, but now it has been specialized and deals in particular, with women's diseases and cures. Some medicines have a certain effect on women; therefore, this has become an independent and new discipline in treating women's specific diseases.
67. ***Pediatrics:*** This is the knowledge of treating children's specific diseases.
68. ***Pathology:*** This is the knowledge of diseases, meaning what is disease, why do people fall ill, what are their symptoms and cures?

The Study of Agriculture, Hypnotism, and Physiognomy

69. ***Agriculture:*** This field studies the most suitable timing for plantation, the preparation of the soil, and the type of care and nourishment required after plantation. It also covers which plants grow in which countries and how to grow them elsewhere. This is an expansive field, for which special colleges and institutions have been established.
70. ***Mesmerism/Hypnotism:*** This discipline has various branches, with the first one being the treatment of diseases. The second is to uncover that which is hidden, for example, to see something which may lay behind closed doors or within a closed cabinet. The third branch related to this discipline is communication. While sitting here, one can communicate one's desire to another

place far away. This is still in its initial stages. The fourth branch is to send the spirit far away. This does not refer to the soul, but to a receptive part of the human brain, which is called the sensitive heart. It can leave the body and be seen by others. The fifth branch is the reformation of moral values, through which one can be rid of harmful habits such as stealing, etc.

71. ***Spiritualism:*** This is the calling of spirits. Renowned scientists are being drawn to this discipline, giving preference to it over other disciplines, when in reality, this is superstition. Christians are told Christian things and Hindus are told Hindu things. All concentration is focused upon one person, and he states that the spirit is within him. At times, the spirit appears separately and indicates its presence by overturning a chair or performing some other act. The spirit does not truly arrive, but this is indeed a real discipline.
72. ***Physiognomy:*** It is the assessment of a person's face to reveal his character or personality, his habits, and qualities. Sentiments such as deceit, faithlessness, love, faithfulness, etc. can be determined. One branch of this science is the reading of one's face, i.e., the analysis of a person's facial features to determine his behavior. A person's character can be surmised by looking at the distance between the ears and eyes, the form of the lips and nose, and the length and width of other facial features. The second branch of this science is the study of the brain [or neuropsychology]. The better one's morals are, the better the state of the brain. Murder and bloodshed stem from distinct parts of the brain. God Almighty has divided the brain into many parts, which designate different emotions and behavior. Falsehood, truth, deceit, love all lie in separate areas. By measuring the size of one's head, this field can determine where the greatest quantity of matter lies. For example, is the area of materialism or contentment greater, or is the area which contains intolerance or patience greater. The most remarkable aspect of all of this, is that if a part of the brain is operated on and the proportion of its matter is altered, it could improve one's habits. This particular study is making headway.
73. ***Power of Suggestion:*** This discipline differs from mesmerism. Instead of exercising effort or treatment, it is merely suggested that one is not sick. Suggestive thoughts influence the body and

if a patient with a fever, is told that he does not have a temperature, he will begin to feel better. However, this is a skilled practice. Mere talk is not effective.

Astrology, Numerology, Palm reading, Magical Arts

74. ***Astrology:*** This is not related to the discipline of astronomy, which I mentioned earlier. This is superstition. There is some level of truth to it, such as the impact the sun may have, but it is not advanced enough to where things can be determined. This knowledge is real, since God Almighty has imbued the stars with some influence, however the way in which people make use of it, is wrong. People wish to turn it into a means of gaining knowledge of the unknown and predict the unseen. This is wrong, for only God Almighty possesses knowledge of the unseen.
75. ***Numerology:*** This is the knowledge of numbers. People attempt to predict future events through the study of numbers.
76. ***Palm Reading:*** Foretelling by looking at the lines [on one's hand].
77. ***Divination:*** This is not the Islamic *Istikharah* [seeking the guidance of God through prayers], but it is the process whereby people sit and roll a string of prayer beads [similar to a rosary] through their fingers and then draw conclusions by looking at the beads. Some women look to Napoleon's *Book of Omens*. These are fraudulent practices, containing no truth whatsoever. They are like astrologers, who claim it is neither a girl nor a boy.
78. ***Talisman:*** This is also referred to as magic, whereas it is actually a branch of the 'power of suggestion'. They recite something over an object or write something in Hindi on a piece of paper and use it as a charm.
79. ***Sorcery:*** Through this study, people or evil spirits are harnessed. Even Europeans are entangled within this field.
80. ***Alchemy:*** This science has created chaos in the world. This is the obsession to make gold and many people have been ruined by it. Even some Ahmadis were caught up in it but are now no longer involved. One cleric travelled from Delhi and said to me that, "Maulvi Sahib (Hazrat Hakim Maulana Nur-ud-Din, Khalifat-ul-Masih I[ra]) used to make gold and he must have certainly shared

that information with you. Reveal it to me." I tried to reason with him, but I soon realized he could not be convinced.

81. ***Parthenogenesis:*** This science deals with questions, such as what substances conjugate to produce offspring. Can a child be produced without the union of the male and female? If so, how? This science proved that a child could be born without the union of the two.
82. ***Animal Husbandry:*** It explains the best way to raise poultry and livestock. What should they be fed, so that they may grow fat, or give more milk, or breed well. Different techniques are argued for within this discipline, while keeping in mind various commercial principles.
83. ***Library Science:*** This knowledge explains how books should be categorized and it is an independent science. Some books are related to several disciplines; therefore, it defines which book is categorized under which discipline, and how to easily find a book.

This is a list of various branches of knowledge.

(Jalsa Salana, Lajna Ima'illah, March 5, 1923)

Address to the Lajna in a Friday Sermon

Delivered by Hazrat Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad, Khalifat-ul-Masih II[ra]

February 2, 1923

Equality in Matters of Religion

After recitation of *Tashahhud, Ta'awwuz*, and *Surah Al-Fatihah*, Hazrat Khalifat-ul-Masih II[ra] stated:

Just as Europeans, Americans, Africans, and Asians are all equal in worldly matters, and just as it is enjoined to treat people of every color, language, race, and national origin equally by the same token, men and women are considered equal in religious matters. In other words, just as religious injunctions are ordained for men, they are also ordained for women.

Surah Al-Fatihah is the root of the Holy Qur'an and is the summation of the Qur'an. Where Allah Almighty has taught the prayer within it, it has been done with great wisdom. Where the subject matter of progress and advancement has been discussed within it, it has been done in such a manner that both men and women have been encompassed. The rules of Arabic language dictate that when the nation is addressed, the masculine gender is used, but women are included within the term. However, in the *Surah Al-Fatihah,* the words are such that they equally address and include both men and women, for example, it states:

اِيَّاكَ نَعۡبُدُ وَ اِيَّاكَ نَسۡتَعِيۡنُ ؕ

"Thee alone do we worship and Thee alone do we implore for help."
(Holy Qur'ān, Ch. 1: V. 5)

These phrases of *Surah Al-Fatihah* are such that both men and women can utter them, and they depict the equality of both genders. Another great acumen is that both men and women are included according to accepted usage. In other words, the lone male

will speak the same words as the lone female and just as some commandments are specifically directed to men, so are some commandments specifically directed to women. This does not signify that only the male gender is addressed, but rather that if some commandments are directed towards men, then others are only directed towards women.

Then there are those commandments, which apply equally to both men and women, e.g., the Friday sermon and the two Eid sermons are made obligatory for both men and women. Typically, men and women sit separately, or women sit on the other side of a curtain or in a separate tent. Women attend *dars,* wearing a *burqa* [outer garment, covering according to Islamic *Purdah*]. Likewise, they can listen to the Friday sermon while seated in a marquee or behind a curtain. Since the man delivers the sermon, men are seated in the front, and women sit separately behind a curtain even though the speaker addresses them both equally. If women sit separately or behind a curtain, it does not mean that the speaker is not addressing them. Just as men are addressed in the sermon, so are women. Therefore, my sermon is addressed not only to men, but also to women. What I am now about to relate is very appropriate according to the time and location.

After much thought and deliberation, I have decided that the mosque, which is to be built in Germany, should be built with funds collected from women. There is no doubt that women might not personally own any property, but there is also no doubt that the foundation of their wealth is their jewelry. Undoubtedly, men are involved in bringing home the main source of income, although they do not always have savings due to their financial responsibilities, whereas women do have something in the form of jewelry. Therefore, during the time of famine, men borrow from women to get by. Men should not think, 'How will women acquire the money, for after all, they receive it from us.' Women can donate their jewelry to give *chanda*. Some women may own more, and others may have less. However, in God's sight it is not the amount but the sincerity of the heart which truly matters.

It is my desire that the German mosque be built with funds collected from women because Europeans believe we regard women to be animals. When Europeans discover that at this moment Muslim women have donated funds to build a mosque for their newly converted Muslim brothers, in a city which is quickly growing to be the hub of the world, they will be quite astonished and embarrassed at their preconceived notions of Muslim women. When they pass by the mosque, a kind of death will pass over them. The mosque itself will be a silent manifestation, persistently challenging those priests who lie that Muslim women have no status in Islam. They believe that women are regarded and treated as animals in our country, and they perceive Muslim women to be animals. When this mosque is built with funds raised by women, they will realize that these women recognize that there exist people in this world, who would worship a man.

On the other hand, it is quite common among them that a husband and wife would begin to quarrel with each other only a month after being married and the husband then goes off in search of another partner and the wife begins her search for another spouse. It is considered strange if a couple is still happily married a month after the wedding. They are unaware of the sort of genuine relationship which exists between a husband and a wife here.

This is a case of the enemy wielding the pen. They hold fast to the pen, and they write what they wish about Islam and Muslims. Maulvi Mubarak Ali wrote me a letter stating that an architect gave an estimate of two hundred thousand rupees to build the mosque, assuming that the nation planning to build a mosque within their country must be very wealthy. But Maulvi Sahib told him that we do not have so much money, at which he revised his estimate to fifty thousand rupees. Five thousand rupees for the land and forty-five thousand rupees for the building, his viewpoint being that a large city of affluent people requires an impressively large building to draw people's attention. An ordinary building will not impress people. It would be similar to a house which is mostly built of concrete yet has a section that remains built of mudbricks, thus the house appears

distasteful.

Anyhow, he estimates that fifty thousand rupees can build not only a mosque, but also the missionary's residence. I wish to present this matter to all the ladies of our Jama'at. This is an age of competition. In England, women compete with men when taking the bar and medical exams, simply to express equality, regardless of whether they will practice it later or not. Well, they are wasting their lives, but we should compete for a noble cause. Therefore, I declare that women should build a mosque in Europe.

Previously, ladies donated ten thousand rupees for the London Mosque and according to Islamic law, women's contributions should be half that of men since their inheritance is half that of men. Accordingly, now women should raise fifty thousand rupees for the Ahmadiyya Mosque in Berlin within three months. According to the Promised Messiah's[as] prophecy, the Russian Czar's staff was taken away from him and handed over to the Promised Messiah[as]. The door to Russia is through Berlin and only through this door can Russia be defeated. Nowadays, there is no possibility of entering Russia, let alone being able to preach there. The only way to spread the message is through Germany. By going through Germany, we can easily preach in Russia. Fulfilling this important prophecy at the hands of women will greatly impact the later generations of that country. They will learn that women are as sincere in religion as men. There, Europeans will learn how much passion Muslim women have for spreading their religion. In the front of the mosque, it will be clearly written that Ahmadi women present this gift to our newly converted Muslim brothers. Thereafter, others will see, and *Paighamis* [members of Lahori Jama'at] will learn that while they collect from strangers and their hands spread wide before them, Ahmadi women can raise equal amounts of funds on their own.

Thus, women from all over should be urged to raise funds for this cause. All the newspapers published from Qadian should announce this scheme and should publish my sermon. In every location, anyone who reads the paper should encourage their ladies to contribute to the mosque within three months and men should

convey this message to their women. Those men whose wives have not come today for Friday prayers, should also inform their wives and encourage them to contribute towards this scheme.

I have entrusted this project to the organization, whose name I have chosen to be *'Lajna Ima'illah'* [Association of the Maidservants of Allah]. Here, [in India] there is another organization by the name of 'Servants of India.' We are not the servants of any specific nation. We are only servants and slaves of Allah.

"Lajna Ima'illah," means the Organization of Allah's Maidservants

It is for this reason that I have given this name to the organization, and I have entrusted them with this responsibility. If women had solely initiated this project [of raising funds for the Berlin Mosque] themselves, it might not have been so effective. Therefore, I initiated it on their behalf. Women should not think that it is only the responsibility of the few to collect these funds. Rather, let every woman rise and collect this chanda from her sisters within three months.

The land has been purchased for the London Mosque, but because its construction requires a hundred thousand rupees, it has not been completed yet. Such will not be the case with the Berlin Mosque. Rather, as soon as we collect funds here, we will begin construction there. This is because we believe that this project will be completed. Therefore, as soon as the money begins to come in, its construction will begin. With this sermon, I invite all Ahmadi ladies to collect fifty thousand rupees within a three-month period. Keep in mind that not one penny will be collected from men. If any man donates towards this project, it will be transferred to some other scheme. This mosque will be constructed from women's contributions alone, so that it stands as a monument to women's sacrifice.

I pray that may God Almighty enable the women to accomplish this goal, *Amīn.*

(*Al-Fazl,* February 8, 1923, pp. 5-6)

Appeal for Construction of the Ahmadiyya Mosque Berlin

Address to Lajna in the Friday Sermon Delivered by Hazrat Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad, Khalifat-ul-Masih II[ra]

March 2, 1923

After recitation of *Tashahhud, Ta'awwuz*, and *Surah Al-Fatihah,* Hazrat Khalifat-ul-Masih II[ra] stated:

One of the sayings of the Promised Messiah[as] draws attention to a universal law of nature and I like it very much. It states:

"A tree is recognized by the fruit it bears."

A tree's value, its quality, benefits, its general usefulness, and it being a source of blessing for people, can all be assessed by the fruit it bears. By fruit, we do not mean what is simply edible, but the objectives and goals, the advantages and purposes for which a tree is planted. If you receive benefits from the leaves, then the leaves are its fruit. A tree which is planted for its firewood, the wood is its fruit. A tree which is planted for its fruit, that itself is the fruit. Thus, if a tree produces fruit according to the purpose for which it was planted and people derive benefit from it, then the fruit it bears is of the highest quality. For example, a tree planted for its leaves due to their usefulness in making medicine, or for its branches due to their value and worth in trade and manufacturing, or for its shade, which is so pleasant that people receive comfort from it; when that tree serves its purpose then it is considered a good tree for its fruit is good. If it does not achieve the purpose for which it is planted then it will not be useful, and even if the whole world says it is good, it cannot become good. If, however, it fulfills its objective, then even if the whole world calls it bad, it will not become bad. This is a truth, which can be applied in thousands of circumstances.

The truth and veracity of an organization can also be judged

by the same criterion of whether or not its fruit is worthy and useful. Does the organization fulfill its objectives according to that which a spiritual movement instructs? If an organization can demonstrate through its influence, effectiveness, and beneficence that it fulfills the purpose towards which a spiritual movement strives, then it is superior and true. However, if a movement cannot prove its worthiness by its fruit, then it does not deserve to be considered truthful.

People harbor doubts regarding our movement because it declares their beliefs and views to be false and rejects them. In general, it is these people who stand against our movement and attempt to find faults. However, it is easy and effortless for the wise and just person to judge whether the fruits of this movement are similar to those of previous spiritual movements. If he witnesses that the fruits are similar, then he is obliged to accept this movement as being spiritual as well. However, if he is still critical, then it is due to his own inner faults and defects and not because the movement is untruthful.

For instance, if sugarcane is of superior quality and someone finds it bitter, then it will be the fault of the person tasting it, not of the sugarcane itself. Similarly, if a person receives a bitter taste in his mouth upon tasting a sweet fruit, it is not because the fruit is bad, rather it is because the person is ill. Thus, if it can be proven by arguments and observations that a certain food is delicious, any complaints thereafter of the food tasting bland, unpleasant, or too salty, does not signify that the food is bad, but that there is something wrong with those who are tasting it. In such cases, there is no need to alter the food, instead it is necessary to treat the critic's infirmity. The testimony of their nose, tongue, and mind is not enough to justify altering the food, but it will point to the fact that their illness should be addressed.

At this time, our movement and the recently announced scheme stands true according to this rule. Three to four weeks ago, I announced the appeal for the Berlin Mosque. Our Jama'at is composed of the weak and the poor. Thus, by looking at its expenses, who could say that we would collect the large sums which

are often required? In India, an appeal for donations was made by the Turkish *Khilafat*. There are Muslims in India who can individually contribute millions of rupees, but despite this, their total collection could not exceed over ten or twelve-hundred thousand. The outcome of this was that if their donations went towards the *Khilafat,* there was little money left for their local endeavors. Thus, the Central *Khilafat* Committee was forced to divert funds from the Angora Fund for local expenditure.

Now, compared to other institutions, our community has the least amount of funds and members. In Punjab alone, the number of Ahmadis is less than the janitors which reside here. As far as funds are concerned, there are small nations, such as the *Bhabar*s [Bhabar are a caste of people in South Asia], in which some individuals alone have more money than our whole community combined. However, despite this, just witness how extraordinary God Almighty's mission is for our community. It is said that there are nearly seventy or eighty million Muslims in India, and the [donation for the Turkish *Khilafat*] was a matter of their survival. This was not the case with our donations. The appeal for the London Mosque, albeit an essential and blessed one, did not mean that we would be destroyed if the London Mosque was not built. Similarly, the appeal for the Berlin Mosque is beneficial, but it does not signify that if this mosque is not built, our community will disintegrate. However, according to them their appeal was such that, if they were unsuccessful, they would have been annihilated. Despite this, they were unable to collect even a hundred thousand rupees. In comparison, our community, which is not even one hundredth their size, is able to donate a hundred thousand rupees for the London Mosque within a few days. I believe that if this was a matter of life and death, then this tiny community could even collect twenty million rupees. We would be unable to collect more, not because we do not wish to do so, but because there would be nothing else to give. Our only limit to collecting a sum of money in matters of life and death, no matter how big, would be the fact that there would remain nothing else to give, not because we did not wish to give more. For all that would remain, would be our lives and even that we would not hesitate to sacrifice.

Anyone who has any sense or intelligence should ponder how

suddenly those people who had been dead for so long have cultivated such spirit, passion, and enthusiasm? This is no small feat. It is a blessing from God Almighty that He has created such a condition. This cannot be the work of any human being. Indeed, there have been other personalities who have conquered the minds and intellect of people. However, this conquest was temporary and short lived. Mr. Gandhi achieved great heights, but only temporarily. Similarly, people held Mr. Muhammad Ali and Mr. Shaukat Ali in great esteem, but it lasted for only a brief time. A few years ago, there was great clamor regarding Mr. Gandhi. However, within two years, he now holds only one-tenth of the influence he had previously. These temporary passions are akin to flowers which bloom from within the rubble of rock and dirt and perish within a few days. However, in the case of flowers planted in a garden and cared for by the gardener, if one flower dies, he plants another in its place. Thus, the passion stirred by people is only temporary, while that which is from God Almighty is permanent. If it ever begins to wane, He rejuvenates it.

Regarding the appeal made for the Berlin Mosque, it has been witnessed that the ladies have set a magnificent example of sincerity which cannot be found elsewhere. As of now, the pledges amount to twenty-five thousand rupees and it would not be surprising if the amount collected exceeds the set target, since many chapters still remain.

The saying, '*A tree is recognized by the fruit it bears*' is apparent in this appeal as well. What I wish to present before you is that God Almighty has created certain conditions confirming His acceptance of this proposal. Whereas in other cases we see people give up their faith if asked to contribute money, we are experiencing something completely unprecedented. My one condition was that this mosque be built by Ahmadi ladies and then presented to their new Muslim brothers. Now, rather than seeing those women retreat after hearing of the appeal who were previously considered weak, we instead witness something rather astonishing. Eleven women have accepted Ahmadiyyat so that they can also contribute to this scheme. This is the update as of now and who knows how many more may join. I believe that these women may already have been Ahmadi, for no person changes his religion just to donate to a cause. They were

already Ahmadi, but they did not have the courage to claim it. Now, they saw that if they still did not show courage, they would be deprived of blessings. In this way, this appeal saved eleven women from destruction. This is only a taste of the first fruit of a scheme, which has saved eleven women from death.

There is a famous anecdote which can be applied here. There was once a King who passed by an eighty or ninety-year-old man planting a tree. The tree was of the kind which bears fruit after a very long time. The King questioned the old man on the benefit of this tree, as it would bear fruit after so long. The old man replied, "My forefathers planted trees and I ate their fruit. Now I will plant trees and my descendants will reap the benefit." The King replied, *"zeh*," meaning 'well said.' It was his directive that whoever caused him to say "*zeh*" would receive four thousand rupees. When the King said, "*zeh*," a bag of four thousand rupees was given to the old man. He took the money in his hand and said, "Your Highness, you had asked when I would eat the fruit of this tree. Other people's trees bear fruit after a long time, but upon planting mine, it has already borne fruit." The King again exclaimed, "*zeh,*" and his treasurer handed another four thousand rupees to the old man. The old man took the second bag, saying, "Your Highness, other people's trees bear fruit only once every year, but already my tree has borne fruit twice." The King once again replied, "*zeh*" and the old man was given a third bag. Finally, the King said that if they didn't move on, the old man would rob them of all their money!

The example of '*zeh*' applies to the Berlin Mosque as well. Other people's mosques are built so that their faithful may have a place to say their prayers. However, even our appeal to build a mosque converts people. It is the fruit of this tree, which is the manifestation of the tree's own qualities, for the quality of a tree is recognized by its fruit. This tree's fruit demonstrates that it bears great potential. Consider how superior that tree will be in its own time. Imagine what exceptional fruit it will bear when even upon just being planted; the tree's roots are immediately doused with the water of faith from eleven individuals?

Now, I address this Jama'at and their women and the other

Jama‘ats and their women, for there are still many chapters which have not sent in their donations. The blessings and joy you receive by straightaway performing a task cannot be attained later. The status of the pioneers is much higher than those who came afterward, for we all know the name of one companion, that of [Hazrat] Abu Bakr[ra], but do we know the name of that companion who accepted Islam afterwards? What could be the reason for this? Only that Hazrat Abu Bakr[ra] accepted Islam as soon as its call sounded in his ear, whereas the other accepted it later.

Thus, procrastination can cause a decrease in the blessings we receive. I call on the ladies here, as well as elsewhere, who have not donated or made a pledge, that a dollar given at the appropriate time is far more beneficial than thousands of rupees given upon delay. Thus, those women who have made their pledges, should make their payments as soon as possible and our brothers should continue to remind them. Although men cannot partake in this project, they can receive blessings by encouraging their women. Some men write to me worried, that their women are not Ahmadis and what should they do? I tell them that this is the result of their laziness, for they did not encourage them to convert to Ahmadiyyat. Where you have shown such indolence, the time has now come for you to feel the pain and realize the extent of your errors.

It is also a sign of their faith that many people are writing to me, asking me to pray that their wives show no weakness in donating. There is an anecdote concerning a maulvi, who once called upon women to donate. His wife was also sitting in the gathering, and she donated an earring. When he came home and discovered his wife had donated her earring, he asked her why she had done so. The call for donation was for others, not for his household. However, the state of our Jama‘at’s members is such that they request me to pray that their women show no hesitation in contributing. Then there are some, who request that they may be granted permission to donate on behalf of their deceased wives.

This phenomenon is unparalleled and has only been previously witnessed among the companions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] and it is clear that if we were required to sacrifice our

lives for God Almighty, our Community would not hesitate to do so.

Our friends should do their best to encourage their women to immediately receive blessings from this scheme. If the construction of the mosque were to start right now, it could be completed with this sum, otherwise it is entirely possible that if there is a delay, it will not be built with even a million rupees. Thus, men must hasten the process. May God Almighty grant us the ability to understand and fulfill our responsibilities and keep us on the right path.

(March 2, 1923)

The Education and Training of Ahmadi Children

Excerpts from the Address
Delivered by Hazrat Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad,
Khalifat-ul-Masih II[ra]

June 29, 1923, after Maghrib prayer
Dar-ul-Fazl, Qadian

Question of Children's Moral Training

This is such a crucial question that the progress of a nation depends upon it. Nations have been ruined for this very reason. When the people of former generations passed away, the next generations could not become their successors. If only someone like Abu Bakr was born to succeed Hazrat Abu Bakr[ra], someone like 'Umar[ra] was born to succeed Hazrat 'Umar[ra], someone like 'Uthman, was born to succeed Hazrat 'Uthman[ra], someone like Ali was born to succeed Hazrat 'Ali[ra], and similarly, successors of Hazrat Talha[ra], Hazrat Zubair[ra], and other companions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] were born. If such a legacy had continued thereafter, how could such clerics exist in Islam who today declare Hazrat Masih Mau'ud[as] a blasphemer and have attempted to place barriers in his divine mission? Have Muslims always behaved like this? Certainly not. The only reason such people exist today is that the current generations failed to succeed in the steps of their forefathers. Thus, the reason for the moral degradation of the nation is because the children did not follow in the footsteps of their forefathers.

The Future Generation's Progress in Secular Sciences

It is a strange sight to behold that in every field of knowledge, the coming generation has advanced beyond its predecessors. For example, the mathematicians of today are more advanced than those from the former days. This is also the case with history, for historical events are more completely compiled now than they were before. This applies not only to current events, but also to those events which took place in the past, for they are better recorded

now than they were recorded at the actual time of occurrence. For example, people today have a better understanding of the events which took place in the seventh and the eighth century, compared to the people who lived during that age. The same can be said for geography. Those countries, whose names were previously unknown, are now known to the entire world, for example, America. Due to Mufti (Muhammad Sadiq's[ra]) residing in America, our children are well aware of the country by reading and listening to his accounts.

Decline of Succeeding Generations in Religion

Strangely, while the succeeding generations progress in worldly affairs, they decline in religious matters. Children advance beyond their parents and grandparents in mathematics, history, and geography. Similarly, the blacksmiths, carpenters and goldsmiths who have passed away are now replaced by workers with better skills. Yet, why do we not find this example regarding religious matters? Even though religion exceeds every other profession in importance and need. There should have been more advancement in religion. There is only one reason behind this. When a historian achieves benefit from history, he attempts to leave behind a successor so that the knowledge does not perish with him. Similarly, a mathematician and a geographer leave behind successors to continue with their works. However, in matters of religion, there is very little desire to leave behind successors who are more knowledgeable. Although, those who have truly understood their faith and do not follow a religion as a ritual, do feel this desire.

Only Wishing is not Enough

The problem is that nothing can be accomplished merely by desire unless there is help available to achieve it. For example, desire alone is not enough for the mathematician who wishes to leave his legacy to another mathematician. His desire cannot be fulfilled unless there are parents who are willing to place their children under his training and education. The same applies to other areas, except for when it comes to religion.

Religious Training Should Start from Childhood

Another great problem in our society is that parents wish to teach their children worldly things from a very early age, but when it comes to religious training, they claim, 'The child will learn once he is older. There is no need for it now.' Even if it is against the doctor's orders, parents will send them off to school at a time when children are not even conscious of their surroundings. They say that the child only wanders around [at home], so it would be better to have him sit at school. What they really desire is for the child to learn something during the very year in which he could have gained some awareness. Yet on the other hand, even when the child approaches maturity, they believe him to be too young to learn Salāt and they say that he will learn it when he is older. If they are asked to wake their child up for Salāt, they will make the excuse by saying that his sleep will suffer. If, however the next morning, an inspector is expected to test him, they will keep him awake all night. Frankly, they worry greatly in appearing before the inspector, but not at all in waking up to appear before God's divine presence.

Teach your children about religion from an early age for those who do not teach their children at an early age, such children will still not learn once they are grown. Just as those who learn something at a later age, cannot make great progress, religion cannot be learned well later in life. The trouble is that what people regard as the age of maturity in worldly matters, is not the same in religious matters. Even eighteen-year-olds are considered too young to be disciplined in following religious practices; whereas a young child of a few years, who throws a pen or rips a book apart, is reprimanded and scolded for these acts. It is said that if he is not disciplined, he will learn the bad habit of ruining things. However, nothing is said when the youth subvert the religion of God. People attempt to teach religion to the child at an age when they assume he knows everything and is old enough to teach others. As a result, he learns nothing. Unless parents realize that the time to learn religion is in childhood, and unless they understand that they can only influence their children in their childhood, the children will not grow up to be religious.

Women's Role in Children's Moral Training

Unless women adopt the same viewpoint as men, children will not grow up to be religious, for men are not always with their children. Mothers spend more time with them, and it has been observed that even religious mothers are lax in teaching their children about religion. If their child is sleeping at prayer time, they let him sleep. Unless is it ingrained in the mothers that religious training can only occur during childhood, success cannot be achieved. Therefore, my first piece of advice is to the parents, but really to the fathers, since the women are not present here, which is to inculcate moral training and teach children religion from childhood, so that they grow up to be truly pious.

Every Action Requires Perseverance

Following this, I would like to speak to the children. As I said before, no nation can progress unless its future generation is inclined towards progress. By nature, I am very keen on children's moral upbringing. No job can be done properly without attention to a proper course of action. In our country, the problem is that we do not focus on a proper course of action that may lead to success. In my opinion, the foremost issue which confronts us and is devastatingly widespread, is the lack of perseverance. Someone asked the Holy Prophet[sa], what is the most righteous deed? He replied, "Serving one's parents." The person asked the same question again, and the reply was the same. Similarly, another person asked the same question and the Holy Prophet[sa] replied according to that man's nature, and for as long as he continued to ask, the Holy Prophet[sa] repeated his answer. This does not mean that this is the most righteous deed, but because their greatest weakness was in breach of this, attention was brought to this [quality].

Our nation also has its own weakness. If someone asks me the secret to success, I will say, 'perseverance.' If he asks again, I will give the same answer; and if he asks again, still the answer will remain the same. If a second person, or third person, or however many others thereafter ask me the same question any number of times, I will say that to be successful in any field, perseverance is the

key. Lack of perseverance creates problems. A person sets out to do a job and then leaves it unfinished. The little that is accomplished will also as a result be wasted. Therefore, until perseverance is inculcated in children and in those who train them, all their efforts will remain fruitless.

Lack of Perseverance Leaves an Impact

Today we host a convention. If in one year, no work has been done on this project, then the effect will be far more detrimental upon our children. The consequences of initiating a project are short-lived. On the other hand, leaving something unfinished has a very dangerous effect, which people themselves may not even recognize. When a task is abandoned after it is started, children are left believing that adults are teaching us that there isn't anything which should be continuously worked at. This will result in their inability to succeed. Whereas, if they are left with the impression that every job requires steadfastness, they will adopt the trait of perseverance and they will never fail.

Lack of perseverance is a great weakness. I have been previously invited several times to address this children's organization, however I have been unable to attend until today. I also initiated an organization for adults, which I personally attended several times to encourage its progress. However, since I have not attended for some time, the conferences were stopped. The secretary in charge probably talked himself blue, attempting to preach the message of steadfastness. He most likely lost his mind in brainstorming countless ways to finish the job. However, they could not finish the task they started and so it was abandoned. They may be eager to offer up suggestions to important governments, yet they cannot even accomplish a small task such as this. It is understandable that a single person cannot do this job, but if they adopt perseverance, it may inspire some if not all, to be steadfast. Europeans truly understand this concept. They have some shops and newspapers which have been running for almost three hundred years. They have been in operation since the original conception of that newspaper or business. Similarly, there are schools which are still running from the time they were founded. The reason for this is that

the pioneers were steadfast and motivated more and more people and the work continued.

After advising the parents, I would now like to advise workers and children to be steadfast. Master Sahib has told me that some parents and their children did not cooperate with him in this matter, which is why this project was stopped halfway through and has now been launched again. I say that if they had been steadfast it would have had an impact and the project would have been sustained. Why did they re-start the project? Because they had recovered from the first time's failure and its impact upon them. They realized that the project had not been completed before because no assistance was forthcoming, yet they still re-started the project. This is called lack of perseverance. They forgot what had occurred earlier and once again, began their work. However, they should remember that without perseverance, success cannot be achieved.

The Parent's Cooperation in their Children's Moral Training

Then there is also the matter pertaining to the responsibility of parents. Initially they say, let us cooperate with and assist the person who looks after their child's learning? But in due course, they become like the person, who was sat under the [burning heat of the] sun and yet upon being advised to move into the shade he asks what the person advising him would give him in return for moving into the shaded area. Similarly, parents believe that someone who pursues [teaching] their children, must have something to gain.

Another story related to this is of a customer who was told that all tailors are thieves, and they tend to pinch some fabric for themselves. One day, he took some fabric to a tailor to have a cap made. He asked the tailor, "Will you be able to make a cap from this fabric?" The tailor said, "Certainly." The customer, remembering what had been said about tailors being cheats, thought to himself that perhaps the tailor only said he was able to do it so that he might keep some fabric for himself also. With this thought in mind, he asked if he would be able to make two caps from the fabric. The tailor again said, "Certainly." This proved his suspicion that the tailor was a cheat. He thought to himself, if I had not asked for two, he certainly

would have kept one for himself. Continuing in this same chain of thought, he asked if four caps could be made. The tailor again replied, "Yes" which made him certain that the tailor was a cheat. He then asked about six, to which the tailor again replied, "Yes." This time, the customer was sure that he would not be able to make more than six, but out of curiosity, he asked if seven could be made? The tailor once again gave the same answer, "Yes." He did not expect for any more to be made, but still he asked, "Can you make eight?" The tailor answered, "Eight can be made." After this, he left to come back the following day. When he came back, he noticed eight very small caps laid out before him. Upon seeing them, he asked the tailor, "What is this?" The tailor answered, "Measure your fabric. You asked me to make eight caps from this fabric, so I made them." In this same way, parents believe that a teacher, who watches over their children must gain something from it. Therefore, they stop assisting him.

The incident narrated by Master Sahib shows that initially, both sides showed inconsistency, including Master Sahib and the parents. This work will not progress, unless both sides make the intention to consistently work together. Both parties should promise to persevere, come rain or storm, and stay on course. I have read several instances where in Europe, people who attend [sports] clubs, have been regularly going there for over twenty years. If Europeans can show such consistency in matters as trivial as sports and entertainment, why can we not show the same persistence in matters of our development and progress? I will now discuss some key aspects of moral training.

Children Should Speak in a Strong Voice

Firstly, I am sorry to see that all the children who delivered their speeches here, spoke very softly. I have an aversion to weak voices and find it quite upsetting. In my opinion, it is every child's birthright that his parents encourage his voice to be loud, so he can make himself heard by the maximum number of people. The child who speaks very softly will be like a small bird, who cannot be heard amid the world's deafening platform. Notice that there has never been a Prophet, who did not possess a clear, strong voice. It is very

important that a person's voice be vibrant, but here, the children's voices were soft and quivering. I believe this to be true to the point that when arranging a matrimonial match, one should choose a person with a clear voice. Teachers should also read books and take advantage of various methods to encourage their students to speak clearly. My younger son, Munawar Ahmad, used to speak very softly. We sent him to Qari Ghulaam Yasin to learn the Holy Qur'ān. One day, when we asked him to read the Holy Qur'ān to us, he began to read so loudly that it took us by surprise. When I inquired as to the reason, I was told that Qari Sahib was hard of hearing, thus he [Munawar Ahmad] developed the habit of speaking loudly, so that he was able to hear him.

I have taught my wives at home, and to encourage them to read louder I sit further and further away from them. Similarly, when I was a teacher at the Ahmadiyya School, I would make the students who spoke softly, sit far from me and I would also push my chair back, which would force them to speak loudly. Speaking loudly will improve your voice's clarity and you should all certainly practice this.

Foster Bravery and Courage within Children

The second aspect of moral training to keep in mind is bravery and courage, which is an extraordinary moral quality and surpasses all other attributes. We should strive to raise brave and courageous children. Master Sahib related to me that when we forbid children from swimming in the pond, their fathers protest, claiming that their children know how to swim, and they will not drown. However, this may be the cause of drowning for those who do not know how to swim. In my opinion, if the children are about to drown out of their own carelessness, then we must save them. If, however, after taking all possible precautions, the child still drowns while learning to swim, then what can we do? The British host swimming contests, as well as boat races and sometimes these boats break down and sink, causing people to lose their lives. However, it does not mean that the sport is now abandoned. They return again to take part in these competitions.

Parents Make their Children Cowards

Unless parents realize that it is far better for their child to face death while acting bravely and courageously, as opposed to them living an idle life, these children will never develop real bravery and courage. Unfortunately, a large problem remains that the parents themselves make their children lazy and cowardly. If it is nearing darkness, they tell their children not to go outside. If the task is too difficult, they discourage them from even attempting it. They want their child to be like a delicate flower [Touch-me-not, i.e., Mimosa Pudica plant]. In this way, the child is rendered useless. In fact, parents should purposely send their children into the dark to instill bravery and courage it in them in every way.

Raising Children to be Swimmers

Children who do not know how to swim should not approach water unaccompanied. Instead, those who know how to swim should accompany them and teach them swimming. This is a crucial skill. Therefore, it is necessary to teach them and urge them to follow in the footsteps of their elders. It is said about Hazrat Ishmael Shaheed[ra], that he once heard of a Sikh, who was so great a swimmer that no Muslim could beat him. Upon hearing this, Hazrat Ishmael[ra] learned to swim and eventually surpassed the Sikh. Likewise, a true Muslim should aspire to be the best in everything, provided it is righteous. It is not to say that a Muslim should surpass a robber or thief rather it is meant in terms of improving oneself in physical exercises, such as wrestling, riding, swimming, etc. Therefore, inculcate bravery and strength in Ahmadi children. The English are watchful of this, to the point that if someone breaks a bone while playing football or other sports, they do not stop playing. Rather, they will take the injured player off the field and will continue playing because stopping the game will impact the rest of the players negatively and instill fear in their hearts. It is due to this training that this small European nation rules the world. On the other hand, if someone suffers a minor injury while playing within our society, we seek to stop the game. Swimming is a very good skill, but the water in this pond is so unsanitary that it is detrimental to their health. This should be kept in mind and swimming should be taught where the

water is clean. I remember when I was young, I would look at others swimming, and I would feel bad because I could not swim. The Promised Messiah[as] handed me over to experienced swimmers, so that I could learn. Therefore, it is necessary to teach children how to swim.

Raise Children as Sportsmen

My wish is that if God blesses us with the means, horses should be bred and our children should be trained to ride them, enabling them to be good horsemen. However, until we can afford to do so, we should teach them other sports and make them sportsmen. A good sportsman has good character, compared to those children who in their childhood adopt grownup routines and when they are older prove to be simply lazy. There was a man, who practiced law and has lost contact with the Jama'at. When he was a student, he would spend a substantial portion of time saying Salāt and crying profusely throughout. Maulvi Abdul Karim[ra] (it was revealed to the Promised Messiah[as] that Maulvi Abdul Karim[ra] would be a leader of the Muslims) relates, "I wish to throw him out of the mosque. Why does he cry? What sins has he committed?" Likewise, when Mian Abdus Salam, the son of our Hazrat Khalifat-ul-Masih I[ra], began to pray, he would start to cry. Maulvi Sahib would stop them, saying, "This shows emotional weakness." It is acceptable for an old man to cry, upon realizing that the majority of his life has gone to waste, during which he has made a number of mistakes. It is also acceptable for a child to cry when praying for a brighter and better future. However, if he cries, asking for God's forgiveness, then he is merely imitating others. What sins has he committed that required him to beg for God's forgiveness? Indeed, if a person cries in his desire to become a servant of God, then that is wholly acceptable.

Teaching Good Conduct in Sports

It is very important for children to play and be active and you must teach them good conduct while playing sports. For example, if someone utters foul language, you should not do the same. Check up on the children's behavior and whoever exchanged obscenities should vow to refrain from doing so again. Similarly, advise them to help the

poor and the needy and relate incidents where someone had the opportunity to help someone and did not. For example, if a small child is standing where a cow is passing by and an older child who is standing nearby does not move the smaller child away from the cow, that older child should be questioned and reprimanded for his actions. Another example is of a *burqa*-clad woman, who is about to be attacked by an animal and a boy, who is standing nearby, does nothing to help but only laughs. He needs to be disciplined and reprimanded and made to promise that he will never act in this way again. Children learn when given practical examples. They are akin to parrots who say, "Sir *Mithoo*, [a generic name given to parrots in Indian culture, much like Polly] I would like to eat *choori* [sweet or bits of bread]' but they do not know what 'Sir *Mithoo*' is or what '*choori*' is.

Teaching Good Conduct through Practical Examples

If in general, children are told to help the needy they will agree to do so. However, they will not know what to do, unless given practical examples. When the wiser children relate how they help the needy, others will learn how they too can help. To train a boy scout, a toy house containing all the furnishings is set on fire. Thereafter, they are taught to put out the fire and save the items in the house. Thus, the children should be instructed of these matters in regular lessons, and we can only do that within groups. It cannot be done individually. Similarly, teaching them to save someone from drowning should be taught in a group setting, where they should be made to practice. If other people take interest, it will be more helpful. Unfortunately, in our society, it is considered odd if an older man wishes to join in a game of young people, even though it is related that our Holy Prophet[sa] used to join in [with children]. The parents should also participate in some of their children's activities and teach them to help the poor and the needy. It is not necessary for our pockets to be filled with money to help someone. For example, if you see a woman in trouble, who may be blind and she cannot pick up her child, a young boy can help by lifting her child for her. If someone falls, assist them up. There are many more examples like this. Since now it is getting very late, I shall speak more on this topic at another time. (*Al-Fazl,* July 10, 1923)

Address to the Ladies at Jalsa Salana

Delivered by Hazrat Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad, Khalifat-ul-Masih II[ra]

December 28, 1924

After recitation of *Tashahhud*, *Ta'awwuz* and *Surah Al-Fatihah,* Hazrat Khalifat-ul-Masih II[ra] stated:

Firstly, I thank God for having sent the Promised Messiah[as] for our guidance and granting us the opportunity to accept him:

ذٰلِكَ فَضْلُ اللّٰهِ يُؤْتِيْهِ مَنْ يَّشَآءُ ؕ وَ اللّٰهُ ذُو الْفَضْلِ الْعَظِيْمِ

["*That is Allah's grace; He bestows it on whom He pleases; and Allah is the Lord of immense grace."*]

(Holy Qur'ān, Ch. 62: V. 5)

God gives this bounty to whom He pleases, and God is the Greatest of the Bestowers.

I then thank God that He has instilled in our Jama'at members' hearts a fervor and yearning to spread the message to others. With the current condition of Muslims and the difficulties they face, it is entirely due to the great miracle of the Promised Messiah[as] that women desire their children to be devoted to religion. Those women who previously wasted their time quarreling or backbiting, accepted the Promised Messiah[as] and now spend their time in the service of their faith. I cannot stop from declaring that although the men of our community have much to accomplish on the path to religious progress, there also remains much more that women in our community must achieve. Rather, I would say that in comparison to men, the need for religious progress among women is much greater.

One's spiritual and material status is very different from their ability to perform. There are some who are enthusiastic, but they do

not have the tools. Or the tools are available, but they lack the knowledge in using them. For example, a man is sick and hopes to get well. Which sick person would not wish to recover from his illness? Yet, [what can be done if] such a person lives in a jungle where there is no healer or doctor available. Or if by chance, one is available, but the patient has no money to pay him. Or if he does have the means to pay but there is no available medication. Thus, merely having the desire or passion to recover from an illness will not cure him.

Similarly, at times the desire is there, but the man does not possess the means. Or he may have the desire and the means, but he does not know how to utilize it, thus both his longing and means are of no avail. For this, it is necessary to have longing in one's heart, passion, and the means and knowledge to utilize those resources. This is the condition of our women.

I see that their hearts yearn to attain religious knowledge and Islam, but they do not possess the means for attaining this goal. No matter how much desire and zeal one possesses in serving God, it will not be enough, until the means and methods to do so are made available. The women's role in our community is such that until they are fully educated and morally trained, I believe that the community will face a great hindrance in making progress and advancing spiritually. It would be analogous to a man who owns a diamond and without recognizing its true purpose, throws it away as if it were a marble.

I remember one time when I was in Bombay [Mumbai] and a man was being prosecuted for purchasing stolen diamonds. The fact was that a sachet of diamonds had fallen out of a jeweler's pocket as he was walking, and a boy found the sachet of about fifteen or sixteen diamonds. He thought they were glass trinkets, although they were worth millions. One man spotted the diamonds and bought them at four a penny. The boy neither realized what he had, nor what its true purpose was. Thus, no matter how precious a thing we hold in our hands, if we neither recognize it as such, nor understand how to use it, then it has no value. It saddens me to say that although our women are zealous, they long to meet God, and are eager to work in

His service, but as of yet, we have been unable to show them the means through which to do so.

European Women

From what I have seen in Europe, if you compare European women to our women in terms of education, it would be like comparing a man to an animal. Every woman there is educated. There is not a single woman who is not educated and who does not understand the value of education, or how the nation should take advantage of it. I have seen women compete equally with men in practical fields there. They make speeches in the same way men do and are involved in various societies, participating fully in its matters as men would. They are involved in national and government-related issues on a par with men. They become members of parliament and like men, they rationally take part in parliamentary matters. There is not a field in Europe where there are men, but no women. There the women challenge men on why they shouldn't work, and they succeed in their demands.

In terms of their humanity, men and women are equal. To both, God has given two eyes, two ears, a tongue, and a nose; likewise, both have been given hearts and hands. In regard to knowledge, if a man can attain it, so can a woman. No doubt, there are things which women cannot take part in, such as war. Nevertheless, one finds many historical examples of women, who showed their ability and merit in war also. At one time, the wife of Abū Sufyān did what men could not do. The Christian army numbered one million, and the Muslim army was only sixty thousand. The Christian attack was so fierce that the Muslims began to flee. The Muslim army was fighting far from Arabia and was in great danger. When the retreating Muslim soldiers reached their women's camp, Hind, who as a disbeliever, had ordered the removal of Hazrat Hamza's[ra] nose and ears, now pulled the stakes from her tent and ordered the women to stop their fathers, brothers, and relatives [from retreating] and tell them to turn back around and fight. Abū Sufyān was retreating as well, but Hind struck the horse with a stick to turn it around and shouted, "If you run back this way, I will kill you myself." The result was that the Muslim soldiers, who

had been retreating with heavy hearts, turned back around and defeated an army of one million. That victory was solely due to the bravery of women.

I was saying, European women are always challenging men as to why they are not allowed to work. At a conference I recently attended, the secretary was a woman and she worked very hard. After studying their environment, I have concluded that our country's men are more intelligent than European men and our women are more intelligent than their women. I have also noticed that those issues, which women in general find easy to understand, their educated men find difficult to grasp.

In regard to our minds, they are sharp, and so are our women's minds [also sharp]. Thus, after expressing regret that there remains much to be done to improve women's education and training, I request the women of our Jama'at to discard the notion that they are weak. They should pursue religious and worldly knowledge. They should remember that zeal alone is not sufficient, unless knowledge and skill are also present. I know that many of you have an ardent desire to serve in the cause of your faith, but this desire will only be useful when it is combined with knowledge and training. If knowledge and training are not present, then nothing can be attained. So, if you wish to serve, then gain knowledge and strive to learn. In the process of acquiring knowledge, you will become familiar with the work process.

(*Al-Fazl*, February 5, 1925)

Importance and Need for the Education and Training of Ahmadi Women

Address to Lajna
Delivered by Hazrat Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad
Khalifat-ul-Masih II[ra]

March 17, 1925

This speech was delivered at the inauguration of the School for Ahmadi Women in Darul-Masih.

[Preface]

The date March 17, 1925, will be a day which is remembered when Hazrat Khalifat-ul-Masih II[ra] inaugurated a school for the education of ladies in that holy and blessed home of the Promised Messiah[as], where many of God Almighty's great prophecies were sent down. Hazrat Khalifat-ul-Masih II[ra] on various occasions had expressed his great concern for the education of our Jama'at's ladies. Due to this concern and attention, Hazrat Khalifat-ul-Masih II[ra] consequently inaugurated this school to organize the education of women.

Blessed are the women who have had the honor to be admitted to this school, and who will *In Sha' Allah* serve as a foundation for the education of women from among our Jama'at. May God bless their efforts, and may He grant them steadfastness in their purpose so that they may fulfill the grand objectives and aspirations Hazrat Khalifat-ul-Masih II[ra] had for their progress in education, which will one day be realized, *In Sha' Allah.*

The special effort which Hazrat Khalifat-ul-Masih II[ra] has put into the inauguration of this school at Jama'at headquarters, and his drawing the whole Jama'at's attention to the education of women is a striking example which we cannot ignore for even one moment.

Thus, the responsible functionaries in all Ahmadi Jama‘ats should turn their attention towards this as soon as possible. In addition, they should study the following speech to appreciate the importance and need for the education of women. Hazrat Khalifat-ul-Masih II[ra] delivered this speech on March 17 after *Zuhr* prayers, at the inauguration of the training school for Ahmadi women at *Markaz-e-Silsila* [Jama‘at Headquarters].

Hazrat Khalifat-ul-Masih II[ra] stated, “The matter of education is such a vital and essential principle, that since the beginning of human history, people have drawn attention towards it. After humans were born or created the first act which God Almighty performed is as follows:

وَ عَلَّمَ اٰدَمَ الْاَسْمَآءَ كُلَّهَا

“And He taught Adam all the names.”
(Holy Qur’ān Ch. 2: V. 32)

Which means, Hazrat Adam[as] was taught the truth of all things. In fact, the real purpose of a name is to identify something; and to identify something means to understand its truth. The only way to differentiate one thing from another is to enumerate its qualities and features. Take the example of a mango and a cantaloupe. We can identify them simply by comparing their appearance and taste. If they did not have different qualities and features, they could not be differentiated. It is for this reason that in the Arabic language, the divinely revealed names which were initially given to things, testify to their truth. Therefore,

عَلَّمَ اٰدَمَ الْاَسْمَآءَ

[*He taught Adam the names*]
(Holy Qur’ān Ch. 2: V. 32)
could also signify that the reality of all entities was revealed to Hazrat Adam[as]. This does not mean that the entirety of philosophy, science, and the knowledge of each and every discipline was taught to him in completion. Rather, he was given whatever knowledge was needed to function at the time. It is evident by this, that the root of all sciences is established through revelation. Knowledge was the first thing which

was established after human creation. Just as in the beginning, God Almighty created all things Himself, and then handed over the responsibility for its advancement to humans; similarly, He Himself laid the foundation for knowledge and handed over the responsibility for its progress to humans. Allah Himself created the first man, but then delegated any further development to man. Allah created fire, but its evolution was brought about by humans. The same can be said of knowledge. Allah gave that first knowledge to humans, who then continued to develop and expand it. From the beginning of time, mankind has been advancing in its quest for knowledge. However, alongside these individuals are also those, who from the beginning of time, have had no respect for the pursuit of knowledge. These individuals have been given the name, *'Iblis'*, meaning one who is trapped in hopelessness. In reality, it is hope which enhances and promotes all fields of sciences. The more hope there is, the greater knowledge will progress.

The word 'hope' has two connotations. Firstly, that the avenues for progress are open for humans and secondly, that we can accomplish this progress. Thus, when we speak of hope, we are declaring that the road to advancement is open for us and that we have much to accomplish. This word also implies that we can attain whatever yet remains to be achieved.

The meaning of hopelessness is that there is plenty in this world, but we cannot acquire it. Therefore, the pursuit of knowledge and its progress are associated with hope. If someone has hope, he will learn. If not, then he will not learn.

[The word] '*Iblis'* means that he did not learn. He assumed that he had already learned everything which could be [learned] and that which he did not know, could not be learned by anyone. In other words, he severed himself from hope. Allah says of this:

اَبٰی وَ اسۡتَکۡبَرَ ۫ وَ کَانَ مِنَ الۡکٰفِرِیۡنَ ۝

"He refused and was too proud; and he was of the disbelievers."
(Holy Qur'ān Ch. 2: V. 35)

Iblis said, “I do not wish to hinder myself in attempting to learn.” The word, ‘*Istikbar’* also means to regard something as too great [a task]. He felt this was all too much. It was impossible to learn these things, for it was all pretense. Therefore, I do not find it necessary to become Adam’s disciple.

Rejecting this pursuit of knowledge left him deprived and consequently disgraced and Adam’s[as] progeny, which did acquire knowledge, prevailed. We see that the following system is continuing to this day:

عَلَّمَ اٰدَمَ الْاَسْمَآءَ

[*He taught Adam the names*]
(Holy Qur’ān Ch. 2: V. 32)

One nation strives to gain knowledge and make new discoveries, whereas another nation claims it impossible to discover any new science. As a result, the nations which advance in knowledge prevail, while the others fall into disgrace. While the Europeans were inventing the cannon and the rifle, the Asians were denying the possibility of an instrument which could be created to kill the enemy from afar. The outcome was that the Europeans progressed.

Thus, believing that something is unattainable turns a man into *Iblis* and in turn, the world deals with them as *Iblis* was dealt with when he clashed with Adam[as]. Just as *Iblis* was turned out, so are these individuals turned out, meaning that these nations are either wiped out or they are disgraced or destroyed. Now, because the Europeans are taking up Adam’s[as] work, new discoveries are being made, and they are advancing in all fields of knowledge, and they are progressing. Those who are not focused on acquiring knowledge and are not discovering new sciences, are being wiped out. One must only look at the condition of the natives of America and the Aborigines in Australia, which previously numbered in the millions. Now, only a few thousand remain.

The intellectual state of Indians is similar to this. They have not been expelled from India, but they are being ruled by people who invested in the pursuit of knowledge. What drove these nations to this

state? They considered the attainment of knowledge beyond their reach. *Iblis* adopts different approaches in different times. In this age, he has adopted the approach that it is impossible to invent anything. When the first train was introduced in India, the Indians could not accept that fire and water contained such power, and so believed it to be a god. When the train would stop, they would place flowers on the engine, saying that this is a deity. Their own hopelessness caused them to believe that man could never invent anything such as this. Thus, man's greatness and advancement lie in his likeness to Adam[as], i.e., in the pursuit of knowledge. However, if he gives in to hopelessness, he becomes like *Iblis*. Thus, you should realize then how necessary it is that man should seek knowledge. In other words, it can be said that Islam means knowledge and lack of faith signifies ignorance. It is for this reason that the Holy Prophet[sa] would oftentimes use the word ignorance when indicating disbelief. Thus, he says:

مَنْ لَمْ يَعْرِفْ اِمَامَ زَمَانِهِ فَقَدْ مَاتَ مِيْتَةً جَاهِلِيَّةً

[He who dies without [recognizing] the Imam dies the death of ignorance.]

[Which means], whoever does not recognize the *Imam* of his time will die the death of ignorance. Therefore, it is the responsibility of every Muslim to acquire knowledge and then disperse it. The word 'Muslim' addresses men as well as women. However, because it is Allah's rule that prophets be sent to nations, which have fallen into deterioration to illustrate how He lifts the fallen, He accordingly sent the Promised Messiah[as] to India. This is because in terms of civilization, politics, and science, it was weak. A community would rise from within India, which would go on to teach the entire world.

However, nations cannot be transformed in a day. Since the Promised Messiah's[as] initial followers were from among the ignorant, it is expected that for the time being, some members of our community may appear ignorant. As a result, it is a weakness in our community that the men, as well as women, are not adequately educated and it is vital for us to overcome this shortcoming. However, there is an appointed time for all matters. First, it was necessary for men to remove this weakness and now it is necessary for women to do so. Albeit not enough attention has been paid to men to bring about a

satisfactory outcome, there is hope that they have been guided to the right path, which will lead to their progress.

Now, attention should be directed towards women. We have established this school for that very purpose, the inauguration of which occurs today. Due to it being in its initial stage, there will be less attention paid to it, but that is the case for the beginning of all endeavors. I recall our high school, which is now a magnificent building, the equal of which the inspector has said cannot be found in India, let alone in the Punjab. On the first day of its inception, the boys were forced to sit on a small rug next to Mirza Nizam-ud-Din's well. Later, the boys were taught in the guesthouse for a few days and afterwards, we built a building of mud and bricks. Compared to that, the start of this women's school is far better. They sit on benches with attached desks, while the boys used to sit on rugs. They sit in their own building, while the boys sat in someone else's. Although it is only this school's beginning, it is much grander than the high school's opening. Today, this opening seems insignificant. However, if the women work with enthusiasm, then as evidenced by His attribute, 'the Merciful', and as it is proven from Allah's practice that He does not waste any person's efforts, this school will prosper in the same way as our high school has. A time will come when it attains such a status that it will be without equal, not only in India, but in the entire world. Since Qadian is *Umm-ul-Qura* [mother of towns], just as the people here will be models in religious matters, similarly this school will be a model in education the world over. Hence, we should not be discouraged by its humble beginnings. In time it will develop, and progress beyond anything we can fathom because it will be one of the many bounties from God and no one can estimate when Allah's bounty will arrive, not even by one minute.

Thus, I inaugurate this school with the hope and appeal that these women will work with courage and perseverance. It will also be their job to draw the men's attention towards this and if they try, they will indeed be successful.

The Promised Messiah[as] used to say that a mother's milk only flows when her baby cries. It is true that men have authority and resources, and oftentimes women taunt and say, "If men won't do

anything, what can we do?" But they should remember that men cannot act any more compassionately towards women than a mother can act towards her child or Allah acts towards His servants. For a mother feeds her baby only when it cries, and Allah bestows countless rewards when called upon, thus how can it be expected that men will be more compassionate and will help women of their own accord? Only women's attention and effort will attract the men's attention towards this, until the time comes when women no longer need the help of men. Mutual cooperation will continue, but in due proportion. If men do all the work and women do nothing, then it would be a disgrace for women. Similarly, if all the work were done by women and none by men, it would be a disgrace for men. Thus, it should never come to this, however it is also imperative that women are able to carry their own burden.

At this time, those who deal with the administration of the Jama'at are also present, so I wish to direct their attention towards the essential issue that *Iblis-ism* cannot be eliminated unless special attention is paid to education. It will only be eradicated when we focus our full and complete attention towards the education of women. I recently found out with much dismay, that one hundred and sixty girls are enrolled in the girl's primary school but how can it be possible for them all to sit in the house where their school is located? It is [so cramped that it is] as though they are trapped within a black hole. I would like the department heads to direct their attention towards women's education and show more concern. I also advise the women that they should persevere in their work so that the ill effects of hopelessness and disappointment disappear, and Allah's Mercy and Grace can appear on the horizon.

In the end, I pray that Allah showers blessings upon us, which will be of benefit to our spiritual and worldly lives as well as in the hereafter. May there be no harmful consequences. Rather, may the consequences be a means to achieve Allah's pleasure.

(*Al-Fazl,* March 21, 1925, Volume 12: Number 104)

Can a Young Woman Present her Parents with her *Mehr?*

An Address to Lajna
Delivered by Hazrat Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad,
Khalifat-ul-Masih II[ra]

July 24, 1925

On July 24, 1925, Hazrat Khalifat-ul-Masih II[ra] delivered an important sermon regarding mehr [dower money a husband gives to his wife]. Since women are generally unaware of matters regarding mehr, this sermon is reproduced here for general information.

After *Tashahhud, Ta'awwuz*, and recitation of *Surah Al-Fatihah,* Hazrat Khalifat-ul-Masih II[ra] stated:

It is Important to Give Women their Mehr Prior to Obtaining an Exemption for it.

Just now, a friend handed me a note, which asked if it is permissible for a sensible adult woman to claim her *mehr* at the time of the *Nikah* so that she can gift it to her parents, who may be in need. In our country, it is quite common for parents to take advantage of their daughters, to the extent that nearly fifty percent of people in Punjab are guilty of this. Therefore, I believe I should discuss my opinion within this sermon regarding this issue and all that the Holy Qur'ān and *Hadith* offer regarding this.

A Daughter Supporting her Parents

Any person can clearly and easily understand the undeniable and undisputed notion of giving *sadaqa,* or charity, to your worst enemy who may have no ties of kinship, ties of blood, or any ties of mercy with you. Thus, there is no reason why a woman cannot show kindness to her own parents, by giving this money to them in times of dire need. The question here is not whether she can assist her

parents, because a person of any faith would agree that men [and women] have the responsibility to take care of their parents, and that they care for them within their capacity. It is not as if the parents raised their sons and not their daughters. Also, it is not as if the sons were born, and the daughters fell from the heavens. In fact, both are nurtured in the same way and born in the same way, and the parents go through the same trials and difficulties for both. Therefore, just as men have an obligation to care for their parents, the same follows for women, who should assist their parents. Therefore, the question does not arise here of whether it is permissible for daughters to help their parents.

The Various Aspects of this Question

Before anything can be resolved, one must look at all the various aspects to any question. We cannot simply categorically issue directives regarding prayer, fast, Zakat, and Hajj. *Shariah* includes exceptions to the rule, and we must be respectful of that. Thus, if the question here, is whether a woman can help her parents, then the answer would be that she should certainly help them, and she should never shy from being as kind and considerate towards them as possible. However, there are certain other aspects to this question which must be kept in mind. For example, the first factor we should consider is that although one can sacrifice one's wealth, physical efforts, time, and comfort for a short while, but it is not possible to continue this sacrifice indefinitely. A person can tolerate any hardship for some time, but he cannot continuously bear it for eternity.

Hazrat Abu Bakr's[ra] Sincerity

Hazrat Abu Bakr's[ra] spirit of sacrifice can be judged by an incident which took place when the Holy Prophet[sa] initiated a scheme to raise funds. Hazrat 'Umar[ra] relates, "I thought to myself that today presents an opportunity where I can surpass Hazrat Abu Bakr[ra]." With this thought in mind, he laid half of his wealth before the Holy Prophet[sa]. When the Holy Prophet[sa] asked Hazrat 'Umar[ra] how much he had brought, he replied, "I have brought half of my wealth and left the other half for my family." The Holy Prophet[sa] then asked

Hazrat Abu Bakr[ra], who replied, “I have brought everything and left the name of Allah and His Prophet[sa] in my home.” Upon hearing this, Hazrat ‘Umar[ra] thought, “Even today, I could not compete with him.” After all his planning, he was embarrassed that still he could not excel, whereas Hazrat Abu Bakr[ra] excelled without intending to do so.

To Sacrifice Every Day is Impossible

This was a one-time sacrifice which was done whole-heartedly, however if this continued ceaselessly, meaning that every day, they presented the entirety of their wealth before the Holy Prophet[sa], it would have been impossible and intolerable for even a person such as Hazrat Abu Bakr[ra]. He would have been unable to fulfill even the mandatory rights for his own self, his family, his neighbors, and his kinfolk. Therefore, although it cannot be done continually, one can sacrifice periodically. *Shariah* would not permit one to perform [such a sacrifice] continually. This is because his own life, as well as those of his wife and children depend on that wealth from which he provides food, shelter, clothing, and other necessities. Thus, if he continued to offer the whole of his wealth to the Holy Prophet[sa] on a daily basis, it would not only have been unfeasible, but would have given rise to unbearable difficulties.

In the same way, a person can bear to sacrifice not only his wealth, but even his life for a friend when, for instance, he sees his friend drowning. He would jump into the water to save him, even if he is unable to swim. He would willingly put his own life in danger, without considering the fact that he is no swimmer. Yet he would be unwilling to die a slow lingering death or offer himself up to suffer continuously. Therefore, one may be willing to bear temporary pain, but no one will accept unending suffering. A person might sacrifice his life for a friend within an hour’s notice, but it would be impossible to think that he could live the rest of his life in such a way as to place himself in the jaws of death. For example, if a person demands his beloved’s life, that person would willingly give it up; however, if he takes a knife and begins to peel off the skin or begins to chop off his flesh bit by bit, he will not be prepared [to suffer in such a way]. In the same way, a person may willingly jump off a

roof for his friend or loved one or burn in a fire; but to die by having needles jabbed into one's skin may be beyond his tolerance. He could never prepare himself for this because sacrifice can only be borne for short periods of time. To live a life of endless anguish would be extremely difficult, and in some situations downright impossible.

What is Mehr?

Now let us examine what *mehr* actually is. It is a provision for a woman's future expenses some of which she may refrain from disclosing to her husband and others. Or it can be used for needs which may arise in future which at the time of marriage, may be unknown to her. Then, there are some needs, which women will disclose to their husbands, but due to certain circumstances, the husbands cannot fulfill them, therefore the women should have some money of their own.

For example, if a woman has her own money, she can help her relatives, parents, or dear ones in need, but it is against her dignity to ask her husband to help her needy parents or give something to her relatives. For her, it is a matter of pride, and she is naturally disinclined to declare her parents needy before her husband.

Therefore, there are many circumstances when a woman requires money of her own. It was for this reason that *Shariah* established the concept of *mehr*. If necessary, a woman can spend it upon those things which cannot be expressed to her husband, or to help her relatives in need, concerning whom she may not wish to mention to her husband. Thus, *mehr* is the wealth which is meant to assist a woman for the rest of her life.

Influencing Intentions

The second aspect which should be considered is intentions. If it becomes common for parents to take their daughter's *mehr*, there is a great danger that the parent's intentions regarding marriage may no longer remain so pure and selfless. Parents are a woman's last resort.

Whenever she is in pain or trouble, she immediately calls her parents and confides in them, for she believes that her parents will listen to her, even if no one else will. Therefore, it is important that in matters concerning the girl, her parents' own personal considerations should not interfere with their sympathy, so that in times of trouble they become a refuge for their daughters.

Disadvantages of Giving the Mehr to Parents at the Time of Marriage

Thus, it is important that the parent's intentions are pure and sincere at the time of marriage. However, if it becomes permissible for them to take the *mehr*, either partially or in full, then irrespective of moral dictates and Islamic law or cultural ramifications, the most dangerous consequence would be that the parents would shift their focus from securing the most suitable match for their daughter to finding a match which would result in the most financial gain for themselves.

If we suppose that parents are allowed to accept *mehr,* they will endeavor to marry their daughter into a family where they can expect to gain the most money, rather than considering whether the girl even agrees to the match. Greed would cause them to attempt to marry her to an inappropriate match, rather than an appropriate one. For example, they might marry her to a rich man who could not keep her happy in any circumstance; where she would find grief rather than solace, pain instead of comfort, and where she would suffer for the rest of her life. A daughter could be persuaded to jump into a well once for her parents but bearing a lifetime of tribulation would be intolerable for her.

A girl who is the target of her parents' selfish desires and is married to an unsuitable match will forever be in distress. Due to this incompatibility, her requirements of love, emotions, feelings, needs, and comfort will not be met, and she will consider her life worse than death. Therefore, no girl is willing to tolerate such misery forever, even if she is ready to die for her parents at any given time.

Consequences of Marriages Borne from Selfish Motives

A girl is naturally desirous of finding ease and comfort in her husband's home and she wishes to spend her days in happiness and contentment. However, when these girls are wedded into unsuitable families for certain reasons, they become bitter and angry. This clearly indicates that they are not satisfied with their marriage and instead of receiving comfort, they feel only grief. Since I have received such complaints, I am well informed on this issue. When women are counseled or advised to endure, they reply, "What are we to do? This miserable existence has sparked flames of anguish and rage within us. Our parents were blind when they pushed us into a position which brings nothing but distress and difficulty for us."

A Girl's Love for her Parents

This does not mean that girls no longer love their parents, or they no longer wish to be devoted and gracious towards them. Rather they complain because they find themselves in a never-ending suffering that they find unbearable. Otherwise, if those very same parents, of whom she complained, were drowning in a river, she would not hesitate to jump into the water to rescue them, regardless of whether she can save them. Due to her intense love for her parents, it would not even occur to her that she was risking her own life by undertaking this act.

Bidding for Girls

Hence, if it becomes permissible for parents to take *mehr*, thousands of girls will be married to unsuitable matches, where they would lead a life of misery, even though their parents will receive some money. Even now, many such examples can be found where marriages are irresponsibly arranged and girls are more or less sold off, rather than wed. Many people covet money, and they will marry their daughter off to wherever they can gain the most advantage, without any further consideration. I have seen with my own eyes such parents who auction off their daughters and declare that whoever brings them the most money, can take their daughter. Such parents only value money and wed their daughters to whomever they

can gain the most income from, regardless of whether the two are compatible or suitable for each other. Some parents are so ruthless that they do not even consider the age difference. For instance, it is common among Hindus to marry a five- or six-year-old child to an elderly man of eighty years. This is not marriage, but a slave trade. *Shariah* law does not permit slave trade, for each person has the right to freedom and no one can take this right away.

Human Freedom Cannot be Sold

It is entirely possible that some people may believe that children are the parent's property, so they have the right to benefit from them, but that too is not allowed. My belief is that one cannot even sell one's own self. I do not believe that it is permitted to sell oneself, let alone have someone else sell you, even if they are your own parents. Parents have no right to sell the freedom and liberty of their children, but alas there exist such parents, who feel no anxiety over this. A female farmer used to visit our house from a nearby village. She would happily boast how they had married one daughter off for this much money and another for that much money, thus ridding them of their debts. They married them off so far away, that they have yet to visit them. If parents are allowed to procure the *mehr* under such circumstances, it would be a grave injustice and would go against God's will, forcing girls to suffer pain and misfortune.

The Result of Well-Intentioned Marriages

There is no doubt that sometimes, parents agree to a match after much contemplation, yet that marriage still fails to be a source of comfort for her. However, it is clearly evident that their intentions were not impure, and in such circumstances, she does not blame them. She believes her parents married her off after careful consideration. Beyond that, it was her destiny that her partner was not a good match. She then strives to live her life with patience and gratitude.

The Mehr is for the Woman's Living Expenses

Since *mehr* is meant to provide for a woman's lifelong expenses and for any future necessities, presenting it to her at the time of marriage in order that she may present it to her parents, or spend it upon some trivial expense, is not appropriate. This is because at that stage [generally] she is not aware of the value of money, nor does she understand the needs of married life. At this stage, she believes that when she arrives at her husband's home, she will take what she wants. However, she is unaware that this assumption is incorrect. Instead, she should have some money of her own to spend independently, so that she may help her parents, brothers, or other relatives.

Moreover, her *mehr* can also be spent upon her own children. She can use it while her husband is alive, but upon his death, she can utilize it to make ends meet and support her children. However, if at the start [of marriage], she is unaware of the potential circumstances and her parents take this money right away, she will be left destitute and in difficulty when the situation arises. Therefore, it is not permissible for parents to take the *mehr* from the outset, but yes, once a woman has recognized her own needs and requirements after marriage, she can certainly give her *mehr* to them if she considers them needy. In this way, a woman can also give her *mehr* to her husband, but he should not secure a promise for it, without first giving it to her.

If it is the case [that her husband secures a promise for the *mehr* to be returned to him by his wife] then a woman will think to herself, 'I haven't been given anything, at any rate. I only have a verbal commitment, thus not waiving the obligation is of no use to me. I might as well free him of this responsibility.' Otherwise, if she had received her *mehr* and was aware of its value, it would not be so easy for her to free him from his responsibility. Hazrat 'Umar[ra] and other scholars and judicious elders settled that a woman could give her husband her *mehr* after a period of at least one year. Meaning, she should keep the *mehr* for one year after receiving it, and then if she wishes, she can offer it to her husband.

Mehr Should Absolutely be Accorded

Hakeem Fazl Deen[ra], who was among the first and foremost to join our community, had two wives. One day, the Promised Messiah[as] said that *mehr* is a *Shariah* mandate and must be given to women. Hakeem Sahib responded that his wives had exempted him from the payment of their *mehr*. The Promised Messiah[as] asked, "Did you place the *mehr* in their hands and then ask for an exemption?" He replied, "No, Huzoor, I just mentioned it and they waived it." The Promised Messiah[as] replied that he should first place it in their purse and then ask for a waiver. (Though, even this is of a lesser standard [in terms of righteousness]). In truth, the woman should keep her *mehr* for at least one year, and only then is it acceptable for her to waive the payment if she wishes. The *mehr* for his two wives was five hundred rupees each. Hakeem Sahib[ra] took a loan of one thousand rupees and paid them both their *mehr*. He then said, "Remember, you exempted me from paying the *mehr*. So now please return it." The wives replied, "How were we to know that you would actually pay our *mehr*? At the time, we said we would free you from the obligation, but now we will not return it." Hakeem Sahib[ra] went to the Promised Messiah[as] and told him the whole story about how he had taken out a loan to pay his wives their *mehr*, believing he would receive his money back, but now both had refused him. The Promised Messiah[as] was very amused to hear this and replied that this is the correct way. First, give your wife her *mehr* and if after some passage of time, she wishes to excuse you, she can. Otherwise, it would be tantamount to receiving credit for nothing. A woman supposes that she has neither received her *mehr* and nor will she be given it in the future, so she thinks, 'Let it be. If he wants me to free him [of the responsibility of giving the *mehr*], then it is fine as it is a favor I can give him without actually incurring any cost to myself.'

When a woman receives her *mehr* and then decides to return it, that is acceptable. Otherwise, even if her *mehr* is a million rupees but she has not received it, she will forgive it, for it is not coming out of her own pocket. It is mere talk, so what is the harm? Thus, it is essential to give *mehr* before asking for it to be waived. Again, if this *mehr* is given to her while she remains unaware of her needs, or when her parents wish to take it from her, then it is unlawful and is

equivalent to slavery, which can never be allowed.

Deceit is not Permitted

Even if it is not a case of slavery, it is still unwarranted to commit any action which would cause a woman harm. Such dealings are deceitful and are not permitted. If a child sells his family house, would this contract be binding? Certainly not! For he is unable to fully comprehend the consequences of such a deal, thus his actions would not be taken seriously. Similarly, it is not right if a woman's *mehr* is taken from her when she is naïve and unaware of future financial needs.

When can a Woman Give her Mehr?

Certainly, if a woman has been given her *mehr* and keeps the amount for four to five years or at least a year, and she then wishes to give it to her husband or parents, I would say that is acceptable and much appreciated. If a woman's *mehr* is a thousand [rupees], and her husband gives her an additional hundred thousand, and after ascertaining her needs and circumstances, she gives a hundred-and-one-thousand rupees to her parents, I would say she acted very nobly. Yet again, if her parents take the money from the onset of her marriage, this would be tantamount to slavery, which is a sin. However, if a woman helps her parents after her marriage and after assessing her own needs, by giving them not only her *mehr,* but an additional amount, she will find acceptance with God Almighty and the Holy Prophet[sa] and will set an example as a devoted daughter. Thus, this is the Islamic doctrine and whosoever acts contrary to this, will violate culture, civilization, and political principles.

(*Misbah*, June 1941)

Important Guidelines for Parents Regarding their Children's Moral Training

Delivered by Hazrat Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad, Khalifat-ul-Masih II[ra]

In 1925, Hazrat Khalifat-ul-Masih II, Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad[ra] delivered a sermon regarding the moral training of children, in which he rendered very important and valuable advice. As childhood training is largely the mother's responsibility, this guidance is presented below for Ahmadi women.

After the recitation of *Tashahhud*, *Ta'awwuz*, and *Surah Al-Fatihah*, Hazrat Khalifat-ul-Masih II[ra] stated:

Intentions on their own are insufficient when attempting to reform your deeds and morals. You must strive and work hard towards it. Without hard work and effort, mere intentions can be of no benefit. Just as it is essential that hard work and intentions go hand in hand without hard work, intentions are useless. It is also a fact that hard work and effort are linked to specific environments and situations. The most suitable juncture to reform behavior and morals is childhood. The ease with which a child can learn a skill during childhood and the ease with which he can bear the required hardship and struggle cannot be accomplished when a person is older.

A child's perception is such that he feels minimal effects of hard work and struggle. At that age, a child is like an empty bowl, which can be filled with anything. He is eager to learn everything; therefore, he can easily learn new skills by exercising that skill.

I can still recall the period of my childhood; the surroundings and conditions are fresh in my mind. I would go out in the extreme and scorching heat, and I did not feel its intensity. In fact, I clearly remember feeling dreadfully wronged when my respected mother, or other guardians, stopped me from playing outside in the extreme heat. I would go out in that heat and feel nothing. I am certain that

when other children were stopped from going out in the heat, they must have felt the same way as I did in my childhood, simply because children do not mind these things.

Therefore, a child does not feel the pain of hard work that an adult does. Due to His inevitable wisdom, God Almighty has desensitized children which is why they are not as reluctant in working hard when practicing anything. If a child works hard when he is young, it leaves an enormous impact upon him when he is grown. However, if he never makes the effort as a child, he will experience great difficulty when he is grown. I happen to know three people, who cannot properly sit in the *Tashahhud* position during Salāt, because they were not made to practice it correctly in their childhood. Nobody ever corrected them, or it went unnoticed by those who were meant to guide them, and now that they are grown, they cannot sit correctly. Out of these three, two are very sincere Ahmadis, while one does not belong to our Jama‘at. Now, if they hope to try and sit properly in the *Tashahhud* position, they cannot do so. Consequently, due to a child’s nature at this stage, childhood is a special time. If a child is made to practice something, he can accomplish things more easily.

However, if in childhood, they pick up harmful habits such as telling lies, stealing, etc., then no matter how they are lectured or counseled, reasoned with or censured, they will remain entangled in such habits, despite knowing them to be wrong.

I have seen people lie and then [remorsefully] weep afterwards over their mistake. They will steal and then show remorse over it, realizing their mistakes and admitting to them, as well as making amends, but still they cannot stay away from the habit of stealing. The habits of childhood stay with them forever, unless God wills, with few exceptions. Therefore, we should inculcate excellent moral values in children during their childhood. This will safeguard the moral values of future generations. It is this lack of moral training in childhood that some sincere and pious people inadvertently blurt out foul language. There are certain writers who are very sincere, but despite being cautious, their pen will let slip harsh language and when they are advised of this, they will firmly

and solemnly reply that they did not use harsh words at all. This is the result of childhood habits, and although they may be aware of the immorality of these habits, they cannot help themselves.

Hazrat Khalifat-ul-Masih I[ra] related, “Once I was informed that a person had the habit of cursing. One day, I advised him in private that I had heard he was in the habit of using bad language. I said that he should refrain from this, because it damages one’s own morals, and hurts others. Upon hearing this, he spontaneously uttered an extremely foul expletive and asked, ‘Who says I utter obscenities?’ At that point, I understood that this person was helpless, and he unintentionally used foul language for it was not his intention to swear, but he did so inadvertently. He was wholly unaware that he had just uttered an expletive.” Thus, when someone acquires a bad habit, he does not believe it to be immoral and even if he understands it to be immoral, he does not recognize himself to be partaking in the act. Even when these people are counseled, they refuse to acknowledge that they have acted in such a way. I have experienced this on many occasions because I deal with people every day. I have seen many people who find faults in others, all the while saying, “We are not in the habit of picking out flaws, but this is a fact.” In all probability, if they discuss other people’s faults a thousand times a day, each time they will insist that they are not in the habit of finding faults. Although, half of their conversation consists of picking out flaws in others, and yet they remain unaware of their habit. If they had been reprimanded during childhood, they would have not fallen into such a state. Thus, childhood is the best time to learn outstanding moral values.

The best way for people to advance their moral values and good conduct is to reform themselves, but in particular, reform their children and watch over their moral character. A child can easily and quickly learn good morals during childhood. If he is not watched closely and his morals are corrupted, the result is dangerous because other children’s morals may also be corrupted. Adults can see a vice as immoral, which is why they strive to avoid it, but as children tend to copy others, they will mimic other people’s actions. If a boy is in the habit of lying, using foul language, or stealing, those in his acquaintance will attempt to imitate him. Consequently, they will

also begin to lie, steal, and use foul language. Thus, the period of childhood is not only a vast arena for learning excellent morals but is also a great space in which to ruin the morals of others.

In my opinion, even great leaders are not as successful in convincing others through their lectures and speeches, as a child is in influencing other children with his conversation. I exclude spiritual leaders from this category, as they are supported by hosts of angels who spread their influence. A young boy who is in the habit of lying can easily persuade one to two hundred boys to fall into the habit of lying. A young boy who is in the habit of stealing can easily mold one to two hundred boys to take up the habit of stealing. Thus, those whose morals are corrupted in childhood, not only ruin themselves, but also cause the destruction of others. Childhood habits are so potent that they become difficult to correct in adulthood, to the extent that eminent philosophers and intellectuals are rendered helpless.

In my opinion, the most important action in safeguarding superior morals is that we exercise great concern and supervise our next generations. This is no trivial matter, but an extremely important one. To achieve this, the first step is to adopt moderation and the middle path. Neither should one be so strict, that they cannot meet other children, nor should one be so lenient as to give them free reign. If a child is not permitted to play with other children, their morals will not develop, because if this is done a child becomes ready to accept a bad habit as soon as he is exposed to it. This is because bad influences are only defeated by willpower, which cannot develop unless the child encounters both good and bad children. A child who is confined within his home and is not allowed to meet others, will remain a boy even when he is fifty years old. He will be like the glass vessel which breaks at the slightest tap. When faced with evil, he will be unable to fight it. However, by continuing to meet people, he will develop a sense of judgment as to what is good and what is bad, and he will attain the strength to withstand evil. I have observed that children who are watched too closely, grow to be weak and even when they perform a good deed, it is due to a habit and not because of inner strength that opposes evil. Consequently, they engage in immoralities as soon as they are exposed to them.

Similarly, those who have complete freedom and are left unsupervised are like sheep thrown before the wolves. If they are saved from bad morals or are reformed in some way, their parents will have played no part in that. However, if they are destroyed and their moral values are corrupted, then their parents are responsible because they neglected their duty and did not watch over their children. Thus, one should adopt the middle path when reforming one's children's morals. There should neither be such severity that they cannot meet others, nor should there be so much leniency that they are free to do whatever they want, without any supervision.

Usually, children do not learn good behavior from their parents, but from other children. However, it is the parent's duty to keep an eye on what their children are learning. This should not be very difficult because whatever a child learns he will soon repeat it before others, and in this way, their shortcomings are exposed.

If parents wish to raise them well, they can easily do so, but many do not curb their children's objectionable behavior out of love and affection. If they do reprimand them once or twice, they do not remain consistent. There are also many who show hostility or needlessly defend their children if their children's shortcomings are pointed out to them. Sometimes, this dispute over the child leads to hostility between the adults. Therefore, the foremost point parents should keep in mind is to refrain from blindly loving their children. If someone complains to you about your child, you should deliberate on ways to reform them. If a child tells lies, steals, or misbehaves in any other way, they should be disciplined, but not so harshly that they secretly continue to misbehave. Some parents respond so harshly that the child hides his shortcomings from them and everyone else. They fall into the habit of misbehaving behind their back, and it becomes impossible to reform such a child.

Therefore, [parents] should remain vigilant that their child does not misbehave in secret, so they remain aware of their habits, and in this way, they can be easily reformed. How such vices are borne and how they can be eliminated is a detailed topic, which I will leave alone at the moment. At this time, I do wish to say in regards to reforming morals and deeds, children should neither be so

restricted that they are unable to mix with other children, nor should they be left completely free to do whatever they wish, without supervision. Secondly, children should not receive excessive love.

After this explanation, let me advise you that where it is necessary to worry over your children's reformation and their supervision, it is also essential to keep an eye on other children's habits and morals. Unless you watch for the other children's behavior, you cannot be at peace with regards to your own children.

Hazrat Khalifat-ul-Masih I[ra] recommended a simple suggestion, which is to have children memorize certain useful phrases, in which they are told that we will and will not do such and such. This has a profound effect on children.

The second remedy, which can be traced back to the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa], is to inculcate the habit of praying before going to sleep, since it is not proper to sleep without remembering Allah. Without fail, the Holy Prophet[sa] would recite *Ayatul-Kursi* and the three *Quls* and exhale the air over his body.

Sunnah are those actions he[sa] regularly performed, and just as the *Sunnahs* in Salāt are obligatory, this *Sunnah* is obligatory as well. If it is a sin to neglect the former action, then it should be a sin to neglect the latter action.

If the *Sunnahs* in Salāt are discussed, it is said that the Holy Prophet[sa] specifically mentioned them, thus making them obligatory. I would add that he also specifically mentioned reciting these prayers before sleep, and it is confirmed that he taught these prayers [to be recited before sleeping] to some of the men. Nevertheless, he neither delivered a formal lecture or instructions regarding the *Sunnahs* in Salāt, nor did he take any such action regarding the recitation of prayers before sleeping. Just as he gave instructions regarding the *Sunnah* prayers, likewise this *Sunnah* is supported by the fact that he taught a number of people this prayer and urged them to observe it.

Thus, for a believer, praying before one goes to sleep is one of the most important practices in Islam. If children are made to memorize these prayers, one at a time, and are made to recite them before sleep, it will be extremely beneficial. Have you seen how Christians do not allow their children to sleep before having them say their religious prayer? The result being that when that person is grown, even if he becomes an atheist, his heart retains the fear and awe of the Christian commandments. Yet this is not the case among Muslims.

I have explained that no matter how hard the parents try to keep their children safe from the influences of corrupt morals, their effort to improve their children's morals will not be useful or effective unless their children are surrounded by good friends and company. Perhaps, good upbringing will instill positive thoughts in children to a certain degree, but if a child with good upbringing keeps company with bad friends, the result is that the bad friendship will weaken the influence of moral training, resulting in almost nullifying the effect of good moral training [of the parents].

Keeping bad company in childhood cultivates such bad habits in a child, that it becomes impossible to neutralize them later in life. Within the heart of such a person, two opposing forces are established. On one hand, his parent's good upbringing pulls him towards virtue; on the other hand, bad company causes him to gravitate towards vice and he will forever remain engaged in this struggle and will never attain freedom from the influence of *Nafs-i-Lawwama* [the natural state]. If parental training instills the fear of God in him, keeping bad company challenges it by undermining his resolve and determination. Thus, complete moral training can only be achieved when good upbringing is complemented with good company.

However, as I have said earlier, the consequences of forbidding children to meet anyone or keeping them imprisoned at home is also damaging because this type of discipline not only leaves their training incomplete, but also stunts their physical growth. If a child is not given the chance to play with children of his own age, just so he is protected from bad influences, he will always

be in poor health and his body will not grow properly. In addition, such children will always remain immature, even in their forties and fifties, because they can only safeguard themselves against evil as long as they do not encounter it. Therefore, once they are faced with immorality, they cannot resist it and end up accepting it readily. Thus, we cannot keep our children safe from the effects of evil by restricting their interaction with other children and by keeping them in isolation. Rather, we wind up making them even more susceptible to evil influences. In the present environment, we should look for the best ways to instill good morals in our children.

The first point parents should regard as foremost in training their children is never to let their child regard any evil as inconsequential, so that he does not consider it insignificant. Many parents feel a heartfelt desire to ensure that their children are never affected by evil influences, but they present such an example before them that evil appears trivial. As a result, they become inclined towards it.

For example, most parents do not want their child to lie, but they themselves will lie in front of their child. Sometimes, they will deny having done something, so that the child does not find out (because it may be beneficial for the child to be ignorant of it). Or, if they do not deny it outright, they will evade and dodge the issue to divert the child's attention from it. However, Allah has created a child's mind to be extremely clever, for the child is rapidly evolving and increasing his knowledge, therefore he inquires into and questions everything, and immediately comprehends the truth. Parents believe that they are doing the child a favor by hiding the matter from him, and if they do not do so it will harm the child. However, the lesson the child learns from this tactic is that a person should act a certain way and then deny it or hide it by beating around the bush because he is fully aware that his own parents acted in such a manner but are now attempting to hide the truth from him.

You should never underestimate a child's ability to perceive something or [think] that you can rid their minds of information [they have learned]. Just as children can quickly get to the bottom of things, they can comprehend the conversations taking place before

them. I read a book about a renowned showman, who conducted shows and was the architect of great performances. Based upon his experiences, he wrote in his book that children were the most dangerous to his line of work. He was never nervous performing before eminent professors, scientists, or intellectuals, but he would always feel nervous when performing before children because oftentimes, they would catch him at his tricks and cause his performance to fail. He further elaborated that the cause for this is that a child has an open mind and has not yet formed an opinion. At this age, he is still learning and trying to perfect his knowledge, therefore he scrutinizes every little detail to uncover the secrets. When adults watch the show, they assume they already understand the finer aspects, so it is not worth their attention. Instead, they direct their attention to the primary happenings and the show proves to be an immense success. Since a child has not yet formed any opinions, he views every action through a naïve lens, and they often ruin the show. He then declares in his book that the greatest, most clever and experienced showmen are those whose secrets children cannot discover.

Thus, children have very sharp minds, and it is very hard to hide something from them. When parents hide something from their children, whatever the reason or circumstance may be, they very happily believe they have saved their child from harm. Yet, while saving the child from one kind of harm, they are causing him another kind. Regardless of how the parents see their circumstances because the child does not see them through their vantage point, he learns from his parent's actions that one can lie to hide something. This is because when the parents deny their actions before the child, or attempt to stall the truth, the child is actually fully cognizant of what they are doing. Since a child is sensitive and intelligent, as well as being an excellent student, he learns the lesson that when necessary, he can change his tune to hide something, for he saw his parents act in this very same manner.

Thus, the first mistake parents make when raising their children is in not being fully mindful of setting a good example. The result is that they themselves are the cause of teaching their children deceitfulness despite sincerely wishing to protect them from harm

and weaknesses. For example, sometimes parents bring certain food into the house when the child is ill. If he eats the food, the child is likely to become further unwell. When the child demands that particular food, they will say, 'We never brought it home,' even though the child is fully aware of the truth. Regardless of the fact that the parents believe they are not lying and that 'it is for the child's own good', there is no doubt that they are lying and indirectly teaching the child to lie. Sometimes they will not deny that the food is in their home, but they will say they have already eaten it, when the child is fully aware that this is false. Or they will claim that someone took it or that the food was spoiled. However, the child knows that no one took the food and neither did it spoil. The food was brought into the house and the parents secretly finished it, which the child observed from behind a curtain. He learns to lie through the practice of his parents and the vice no longer holds any weight [in the child's mind]. He begins to lie because even though his parents forbade him from lying, they themselves told lies when necessary, therefore the child thinks that it cannot be such a bad practice.

Likewise, stealing is another vice. Compared to lying, it is my opinion that parents more consistently instill the practice of stealing within their children, as if they are specifically tutoring them. For example, at times parents do not wish to give their child something, but do so upon the child's insistence, and then surreptitiously hide it from them. Perhaps, morally speaking, this act cannot be called theft because they quietly repossessed that which was theirs in the first place, and which had never been intended for the child. However, this creates a notion in the child's mind that this is something that can be resorted to and so he will also begin to hide things.

The result of such parental behavior is that a child can pick up the habit of stealing far more easily from his parents than picking up the habit of lying. Therefore, the first necessary rule parents should follow when training their children is to refrain from adopting such manners and presenting their own weaknesses in such a way that [inadvertently] draws the child's attention towards vice.

I have noticed that the second limitation in the upbringing of

children is due to the parents being rich or poor. In both cases, two weaknesses are cultivated in children, which I will elaborate upon later. The poor develop certain faults due to poverty and the children of the wealthy develop certain flaws due to comfort and affluence.

I have observed that some affluent parents give their children so much money that their habits and morals are ruined, and they go astray. If a child has more money than is needed to fulfill his immediate needs, he attracts bad company and immoral behavior. Immoral children with no money of their own to support their immoral behavior, begin to look for wealthy boys to befriend, so as to use their money to indulge their own weaknesses, while destroying the other boy's morals in the process.

I do not suggest that children should not be handed money at all, for it is also necessary to give children an allowance according to their needs, for them to learn how to spend it. However, they should not be given so much that it remains unspent because such a situation will attract mischievous and dissolute boys who will ruin their morals and lure them astray. Since they do not gain anything by befriending poor boys, those who are wayward entrap those who are well off. They search for wealthy children to support their bad habits.

I was extremely surprised to hear a respected friend of mine give his child a monthly allowance of fifty rupees, simply as pocket money. He actually said, "I have reduced his monthly allowance from before. I give him this much money so that he remains happy while living in Qadian." He is a very pious man and although his son is still a child, it is my understanding that he is also sincere. However, this approach is likely to corrupt the child's morals. A child should be given only so much pocket money every day that would take care of his daily needs. The parents should then evaluate whether or not their child is spending his money based upon his needs. First, they should ask the child why he needs the money. For example, does he wish to buy cantaloupes, mangoes, or something else? Next, they should determine whether or not he actually spent his money on that item. If supervised in this way they will be saved from falling into waywardness, and dissolute and ill-mannered boys

will not be drawn to them.

Another defect which corrupts children's morals is caused by poverty. Sometimes such parents are themselves greedy, and when they bring something home, they eat it themselves and do not share it with the child. Consequently, the child develops the habit of sneaking food within the home and then gradually begins to steal food from outside the home. In this way, the child's character becomes corrupt, and he goes astray. Therefore, when parents bring food into the home, they should first give it to their children and then eat it themselves.

The second failing created by poverty is that while some parents may not be like those who partake of something and refuse to share it with their own children, but when a child wants something and they cannot afford to fulfill their wish, they beg it from others. They say that our child also wants things and, in this way, they can satisfy his wish. Yet, by adopting this approach instead of curbing the child's desires, they aggravate it. If you explain to the child that you are poor and cannot afford it, they will be satisfied upon hearing this. No one is more content than a child. However, if we have nothing and we go to others to fulfill their desires, the result will be the child's inability to develop patience and contentment and their greed will only escalate. Thus, the poor should not try to arouse their children's desires, but should instead attempt to curb them, so that they cultivate patience and contentment.

Next, parents should not allow their child to linger in such areas where the rich are enjoying good food. Not only should children be discouraged from wandering around such places, but adults are directed to do the same. This is because if you do not have something which others have, it is a sin to even gaze upon it as this will cultivate an evil desire.

Some parents who may be poor do not forbid their children to wander in the areas where the rich eat and drink. This creates a desire which if unfulfilled leads them to try and acquire it by whatever means possible. Therefore, it is the parents' duty to stop their children from gathering in such areas and to forbid them from

lingering there. In these circumstances, even gazing upon another person is a weakness as it creates temptation and greed, leading a child towards immorality. Hence, if for the sake of their children's upbringing parents watch over these issues, they can strengthen their children's morals quite effectively.

Now, I wish to say that in my opinion, the most principal factor in correcting children's morals and conduct is developing the habit of performing Salāt in congregation. In my experience, I have never seen anything more effective in creating righteousness, than congregational prayer. Congregational prayer is the best way to influence righteousness. If I cannot fully elucidate upon the following verse, then I consider that to be a fault of my speech:

إِنَّ الصَّلٰوةَ تَنْهٰى عَنِ الْفَحْشَآءِ وَ الْمُنْكَرِ ؕ

"Surely, Prayer restrains one from indecency and manifest evil."
(Holy Qur'ān, Ch. 29: V. 46)

Otherwise, in my opinion even if a person gradually surpasses Satan in transgression, still that individual has a chance to reform himself if he is regular in offering congregational prayer. The thought never crossed my mind, slight as it may be, to forego the hope of reforming a person who is regular in congregational prayer but is entangled in his own weaknesses. I have such strong faith in the power of Salāt influencing virtue that I swear on Allah, that no matter how sinful a person is, if he regularly performs congregational prayer he can be reformed, and he will not be wasted. I can say with complete assurance that if he finds pleasure and joy in regularly performing congregational prayer, then the period for reformation will continue until his very last moment.

In my view, there is no greater enemy of their children than such parents who do not inculcate the habit of congregational prayer within them.

I remember my own experience. Hazrat Sahib [the Promised Messiah[as]] was once so ill, that he could not go to the mosque for Friday prayers. At the time I was not an adult, so the directives

applicable to adults did not apply to me. However, I was on my way to the mosque to offer Friday prayers when I met a person on the way. In general, it is hard to remember a face at that age, but this incident had such an effect on me that I can still recall that person's face. His name is Mohammad Bukhsh and he now lives in Qadian. I asked him, "Are you already returning? Has the prayer been offered?" He replied, "There are too many people and there was no more room at the mosque, so I have come back." Upon hearing this, I turned back and offered prayers at home. On observing this, the Promised Messiah[as] asked me why I did not go to the mosque to offer prayers. Since childhood, by the grace of Allah, I have always given the Promised Messiah[as] due respect for his station as a Prophet. I detected a tone of severity in his question and the flush of anger upon his face. His way of questioning me left a lasting effect. I replied that I did go, but there wasn't enough room, so I had returned. The Promised Messiah[as] remained quiet after hearing this, but after Friday prayers, when Maulvi Abdul Karim[ra] came over to inquire after his health, the first question the Promised Messiah[as] asked him was whether more people had been present that day at the mosque. At that moment I became extremely anxious, for I had not gone to the mosque. I did not know if the man was mistaken, or I had misunderstood him regarding whether there had been enough space at the mosque. I worried that if either of us were mistaken, the blame would lie on me. Maulvi Abdul Karim[ra] confirmed, "Yes Huzoor[as], there were actually quite a lot of people at the mosque today."

Even to this day I do not know the truth. Allah either provided the means for my exemption through Maulvi Sahib's affirmation or truly a great number of people came to the mosque that day. Whatever the case, this incident left a deep impact upon my heart, and it reveals the depth of the Promised Messiah's[as] concern for congregational prayer.

If an adult does not offer congregational prayer, then he is a hypocrite. However, those parents are the murderers and slayers of their own children who do not inculcate the habit of congregational prayer within their children. If parents instill the habit of congregational prayer in their children, the time will never come when it will be said of them that reformation is impossible, and a

cure cannot be found.

Another factor which thwarts a child's training is excessive love, whereby they are overprotected and provided for rather than taught to work hard. If children can go out and play in the extreme heat, baring their heads and feet, or if they can wander around in the cold, then why is it considered a hardship for them to offer congregational prayers? If in fulfilling their own needs, they do not care whether it is hot or cold, nor do they feel distress, then how can offering congregational prayers cause them discomfort? In short, children should be made to develop the habits of endurance and resilience.

These days, there are several recently formed comforts available to destroy a child's spirit of hard work and resilience and oftentimes schools promote such delicate practices. For example, the practice of keeping unusually long hair in the fore part of the head. The reason behind adopting such unnecessary daintiness is that they wish to look pretty and to be loved by others. These qualities are solely feminine, and I have noticed that such boys walk and speak like girls. Therefore, children should not be allowed to be overly particular in food and clothing.

In my opinion, excessive consumption of meat is the reason behind the lack of fortitude in children. Their bones are still weak, and their sexual organs and urges are aroused too early. Therefore, vegetables and fruits are more beneficial. I am not suggesting that meat should be forbidden to them but that excessive amounts are harmful. Although some children who have a weak chest or who are instructed by their doctors, should eat meat. However, in normal circumstances, vegetables are more beneficial for children.

Moral improvement is brought about in two ways the world over. Firstly, through faith. Soon after one commits sin, one immediately becomes alert and aware, as if they were sleeping and they are suddenly awake. The other means to improvement is force of habit, which is also divided into two types.

One form of habit is good in its nature and the other is bad.

The habit which is good in its essence leads to other good habits; and the habit which is bad in its nature creates other bad habits. Thus, a person instinctively endorses and respects those good virtuous habits which lead to further good virtuous habits. When he associates himself with a good habit, his sense of honor stops him [upon realizing his bad habits] and reprimands him and he is obliged to straighten his direction.

If a person advertises on his shop sign that shoes are sold here, but inside he only has rice he will be reprimanded by the angry customer who came in to buy shoes but is only met with rice. The shopkeeper will have no choice but to remain quiet, for there is such an enormous difference between rice and shoes, leaving no room for excuses or explanations. However, if he had advertised rice on his sign, there would have been room for discussion regarding its quality. Therefore, some matters are so simple, obvious, and clear that they leave no room for argument. For example, if the *Shariah* did not dictate congregational prayer to be obligatory, then those who do not say Salāt could excuse themselves by saying they would offer it at home. However, given the way congregational prayer has been rendered obligatory, if he does not go to the mosque for congregational prayers, he cannot excuse himself by claiming to offer his prayers at home. Therefore, by maintaining their gaze upon such clear and prominent commandments, the followers of these dictates establish a collective sense of honor, which results in safeguarding a person from straying morally for fear of being reviled by society.

One of these issues is the keeping of one's beard. I am always amazed at why people shave their beards. I also keep a beard and see no reason to shave it off. I have never witnessed a person walking with his head bowed down and who upon inquiry he replies that the weight of his beard draws his head down. Nor have I ever come across any man feeling restless and agitated who replies upon inquiry that he is feeling very hot, and he is now going to shave off his beard. Similarly, I have never seen anyone shave off his beard out of necessity. They shave it off to imitate others, simply because people ridicule them or because no one else keeps a beard. If there is no reason to shave off a beard, then why is it done? Keeping a beard

is an Islamic tradition. When an outsider observes a person shaving off his beard who is known to be a Muslim, he will obviously assume that this person has no respect or reverence for Islamic traditions in his heart, and by shaving off his beard he disrespects Islam. A beard is not burdensome, nor does it make one feel too hot. Given that keeping a beard is an Islamic tradition and the Holy Prophet[sa] desired it, it is a commandment, the obedience of which is evident to all. A longer forelock can be hidden in a cap or turban, but one cannot hide his chin, thus it is not too much to ask to keep a beard in obedience to the Holy Prophet[sa] and in deference to Islamic traditions.

A person asked me if keeping a beard is a fundamental Islamic doctrine. Take notice of how those who would question this [doctrine] seek out different paths. He intended for me to say no, so that he could argue if it is not an Islamic doctrine, then it is the same whether one obeys it or not. However, I replied that although wearing a beard is not an Islamic rule, obeying the Holy Prophet[sa] is, and since he has commanded us to do so, it is obligatory.

This question is similar to that of someone asking if carrying wood is a fundamental doctrine of Islam. When the answer is negative, he concludes that when his father asked him to carry wood and he refused to do so and his father struck him it was an act of cruelty. Perhaps carrying wood is not an Islamic principle, but when one hears that his father asked him to carry the wood and he refused, no one will consider him a victim. In fact, everyone will reprimand him because Islam commands us to obey and respect our parents.

Or for example, someone might ask if sitting in the front row at a gathering is a principle of Islam? Everyone will reply that it is not and will in fact say that sitting in the back is a sign of humility. However, if they discovered that a prophet or *khalifa* had asked him to sit in the front and he refused, no one would consider this humility, for he refused to sit in the front despite his master's command. Similarly, if a soldier asks a doctor if staying up all night is good for one's health, the doctor will not reply, "Yes, it is recommended," but will instead advise him to rest during the night. However, it would be wrong for the soldier to assume from the

doctor's statement that while he is on guard duty, he should not stay awake all night. Or that he has been unfairly court marshaled for sleeping at night. In this case, even the doctor would say that he should have stayed awake, because the army officer had ordered him to stay awake and keep guard.

A similar incident occurred in America. A man, who was his parents' only son, was appointed as a guard at an extremely dangerous juncture. The soldier who was supposed to relieve him, never arrived and it became very late. Since he was exhausted from standing guard, he leaned against something and fell asleep. The officer found him in this condition, arrested and prosecuted him. The judges acquiesced that this soldier fell asleep out of exhaustion, and the person who was supposed to relieve him was at fault, but if the enemy had attacked in this situation and found him negligent, thousands of lives would have been lost. Therefore, even though he was his parent's only son, he was shot dead. Now, if the entire incident is not related, he is said to be a victim of injustice. Has sleeping ever been considered an offense? Particularly, when a person is extremely fatigued. It would be considered a mistake. One should always consider the nature of the question. Some questions are of a moral nature, the specific character of which should be looked at because circumstances and situations vary. Some questions are more concrete, and the potency of the question is considered rather than its nature. A person can hide any number of moral issues and their conditions are subject to change, however, certain concrete and obvious commands cannot be concealed. For example, the hair on one's head can be seen by all. Actually, one may be able to conceal his head under a cap, but no one can hide a clean-shaven chin. I am sorry to say that some seniors also shave their beards, and by seniors, I mean older men. If someone stops them, they ask whether wearing a beard is an Islamic principle. Although at home, if they asked their wives to cook rice for them or to wear a certain type of dress and the wives did not comply but instead questioned them as to whether it was a principle of Islam, the husbands would not like their answer. Therefore, when the same point is applied to them, how can they ask if this is a principle of Islam?

Consequently, I for one wish my students to fully obey these

clear commands and Islamic customs, so that every single person can see and opine that they [the students] honor or follow the customs of Islam.

The second factor which is essential for the reformation of morals and is principally forbidden by Islam, is to avoid becoming addicted to anything which is harmful. You see, the *Shariah* forbids the consumption of alcohol because it is the type of habit, which is hard to give up, and a person becomes entangled in various sins because of it. Such a habit causes a person to lose his freedom and become enslaved by others. Smoking a *hookah* [water-pipe for smoking tobacco] or cigarettes are both such habits from which significant depravities are borne. Once an Ahmadi came here and pledged that he would never smoke again because he had faced great humiliation that day. At that time, *hookah* was not readily available here (although now I have noticed that the scent of hookah travels from the markets and through the streets to our house) and he was addicted to it. While searching for it, he ended up in Mirza Imam-ud-Din's neighborhood, who is our relative. He was the Promised Messiah's[as] paternal cousin, but a staunch opponent of the community. When the Ahmadi gentleman joined him to smoke *hookah*, Mirza Imam-ud-Din began to curse the Promised Messiah[as], mock, and ridicule him. For the sake of the *hookah*, he sat quietly and listened to everything. He relates that at that moment, he resolved never to smoke *hookah* again, for it had corrupted him so greatly. He had some degree of faith, so he was saved. But there have been many men who have come here to reform themselves but have gone astray when for the sake of smoking hookah, they wound up sitting in such company. Addiction to *hookah* and tobacco makes one cowardly, weak, and subservient to others.

Pathans [ethnic Afghans] look down on *Kashmiris* [people from Kashmir], although their situation is not the same in India as it is in Kashmir. People who come here for manual labor are usually viewed as inferior. I once saw a *Pathan*, who had lost his packet of powdered chewing tobacco and had grown very agitated, plead with a passing *Kashmiri*, "O my *Kashmiri* brother, would you happen to have some powdered chewing tobacco?" Therefore, addiction makes one subservient and weakens the willpower. Allah has naturally

made me free from becoming addicted to anything. When I was a child, I was treated with opium for six months due to an illness, but even then, I was not addicted to it. My respected mother says even on the days it [the dose] was missed, I did not suffer. I drink tea, but am not addicted to it, although I do avoid it at times to forestall any weakness.

Thus, wherever people are found to smoke tobacco, those who smoke cigarettes or use *hookah*, will join them due to their cravings. Their hunger for *hookah* lures them in, regardless of whether the people are pious or evil.

One anecdote relates the story of a Hindu who was addicted to smoking *hookah*. Once he was traveling and felt a craving for it. He came across a janitor's *hookah* and began to smoke it, even though ordinarily a Hindu does not even allow a low-caste janitor to approach him, much less smoke his *hookah*. When he saw the janitor approaching, he worried that the janitor might now boast of this [incident], so he called out to him and asked him not to mention it to anyone. After smoking the *hookah*, he then quietly left. Therefore, one should avoid all sorts of bad habits so that they remain free of enslavement.

In addition to being the root of all immoralities and making one cowardly and enslaved to others, smoking *hookah* causes many diseases. *Hookah* is harmful to the nerves, causes asthma, seizures, and many other diseases. Therefore, my second advice is to refrain from smoking tobacco, for in addition to causing a number of moral weaknesses, it is detrimental to one's health. *Hookah* should not be found at the Ahmadiyya *Chowk* [crossroads] or in our markets. Our office bearers should keep a strict watch over this matter. I am disappointed that *hookah* is smoked at our shops and in our markets. There is an anecdote from the time of the Promised Messiah[as], in which he was once informed of a person who sat in the guesthouse and constantly smoked *hookah*. The Promised Messiah[as] expelled him immediately. There can be no comparison between when the Promised Messiah[as] evicted a *hookah* smoker from the guesthouse and nowadays, when *hookah* is smoked freely in our markets and at the crossroads. If the office-bearers had lapsed, then it was the duty

of the other members of the community to boycott the shops where *hookah* was smoked, or cigarettes were being sold. In the first place, the office-bearers should have realized the need to eradicate this weakness. If they did not do this, it was the duty of the others to remind them. We cannot compel the general population to refrain from smoking *hookah*, but we can compel our students, as it has adverse health effects. So far, many people have given up smoking *hookah* upon my advice. People from all walks of life have done so, including the young and the old, the rich and the poor. It is my hope that those remaining will also give it up.

One of the signs mentioned regarding *Dajjal* [Anti-Christ] is that smoke will precede him, as well as follow him. A cigarette smoker emits smoke from his mouth, which then moves behind him. As Europeans move from place to place, they smoke, which is another trait of *Dajjal*. However, the Promised Messiah[as] came to eradicate the traits of *Dajjal*, therefore you should also give them up. The two issues which I have mentioned are not only evil habits, but they are also signs of *Dajjal*. Therefore, you should rid yourself of these signs of *Dajjal,* reform yourselves, and attempt to reform others so that you may become a model for the world.

May God Almighty enable you to safeguard yourselves against the root of all immoralities, *Amīn*.

An Admonition to Ahmadi Women

Delivered by Hazrat Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad,
Khalifat-ul-Masih II[ra]
1925

Hazrat Khalifat-ul-Masih II[ra] addressed the Ladies at the 1925 Jalsa Salana, which could not be noted down in full. However, the main message of the address is noted below.

After the recitation of *Surah Al-Dahr*, Hazrat Khalifat-ul-Masih II[ra] said, "This *Surah*, or rather this *rukū'*, which I have recited, reveals how God Almighty explains the beginning, the middle, and the end of human life. Therefore, this *rukū'* is perfect in terms of its theme.

Consider your own Birth

Allah Almighty says:

هَلۡ اَتٰی عَلَی الۡاِنۡسَانِ حِیۡنٌ مِّنَ الدَّهۡرِ لَمۡ یَکُنۡ شَیۡئًا مَّذۡکُوۡرًا ۝

"There has certainly come upon man a period of time when he was not a thing spoken of."

(Holy Qur'ān, Ch. 76: V. 2)

In this world, man commits sin due to arrogance because arrogance confounds one's mind, making him blind despite having eyes, and making him deaf despite having ears. He does not understand that for every human being, whether he is rich or poor, a beggar or a King, there existed a time when no one spoke of him.

Every person should carefully consider their own life. A person who is now forty years old; who knew of them forty-one years ago? A person who is now fifty years old; who knew of them fifty-one years ago? Thus, no matter how great a person is, they

should consider where their life started from. The world ran smoothly before their birth, and nothing was amiss in the world before they were born. The world has suffered no loss as a consequence of the death of the greatest tyrant or conquering monarch and the world continues to run as it did before. A time came when even the greatest kings who ruled the world fell into obscurity! Humans should continue to ponder over their birth as it will prevent them from developing arrogance and save them from many sins.

The Birth of a Child

Allah Almighty says:

إِنَّا خَلَقْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ مِنْ نُّطْفَةٍ أَمْشَاجٍ ۖ نَّبْتَلِيهِ

فَجَعَلْنَاهُ سَمِيعًا بَصِيرًا ۝

"We have created man from a mingled sperm-drop that We might try him; so We made him hearing, seeing."

(Holy Qur'ān, Ch. 76: V. 3)

Each and every person goes through a phase when they are unable to communicate with the people around him. Then, from the best qualities of various substances, We made them a being who could hear and see. What is a human being? Simply a product of various grains, vegetables, and meat which their parents consumed. After all, a child is born from their mother and father. No child has ever fallen from the sky. Simply, if a person does not eat, then she will not survive, let alone give birth to anyone.

The Birth of the Soul

The soul is created from within the child itself. Most people believe that the child is born from the mother and father and the soul descends from the heavens which was waiting with Allah. However, this concept is incorrect. The truth is that the soul is also created from the parents, and it is an absurd and nonsensical notion that while the child is born from the mother and father, the soul descends from the sky.

It is the belief of the Aryas that the soul has existed forever, which would mean that God is not the Creator of the soul. In *Surah Al-Dahr,* God describes a child's development in his mother's womb as a time when he was unknown. From the essence of a few elements, God molded the child into a seeing and hearing person. Those elements were the extraction from the very food which his parents consumed. The birth of a child and his soul is similar to the preparation of vinegar from dates and barley, and then wine from vinegar. This is how the soul is created from the child.

The essence of rose is a product of rose petals and is prepared in a unique way. Thus, just as essence is extracted from the petals of a flower and as wine is prepared from vinegar, similarly the soul is created from within the child's body. There is not much information available in our country, but in Europe, they extract perfume from medicines. They mix one or two medicines together and a fragrance is created!

Thus, just as essence is created from flowers and wine is created from barley, the soul is created from the body. The child's body is created first and then the soul comes into being from within. For Allah Almighty states:

اِنَّا خَلَقۡنَا الۡاِنۡسَانَ مِنۡ نُّطۡفَةٍ

(Holy Qur'ān, Ch. 76: V. 3)

Which means, "We have created the human being from an amalgamation of various foods consumed by the parents, such as meats, vegetables, water, diverse types of fruits, and all kinds of lentils."

Man has been Given the Ability to Choose

Allah says:

اِنَّا هَدَيۡنٰهُ السَّبِيۡلَ اِمَّا شَاكِرًا وَّ اِمَّا كَفُوۡرًا ۝

"We have shown him the Way, whether he be grateful or ungrateful."

(Holy Qur'ān, Ch. 76: V. 4)

We created the mixture, an extraction from all things and we blessed it, and it became a walking, talking human being. So now you see how you were created. From the standpoint of creation, there is no difference between you and the cow, sheep, and goat. If there is any differentiation, it is due to His Grace because He bestowed divine revelation. He sent down His word [the Holy Qur'ān] upon him [man] and gave [man] the choice to either be grateful or ungrateful. Allah created man from lowly particles and then empowered him to either strive in His way to receive His blessings, or to reject His prophet. Allah does not interfere with the power of choice He has bestowed upon mankind. However, Allah did reveal His word to mankind, and outlined that mankind would progress if they followed it.

Why has Man Been Given the Power to Choose?

One may ask, why has Allah bestowed man with this capacity and why did He give him this freedom? What was His purpose behind this? Let it be clear that if God had not given mankind the ability to choose, man would never have made any progress.

Let me explain. Fire has a special characteristic which is that it burns. Fire will burn anything which falls into it, even if the thing itself creates fire. You see, if a lantern which is lit falls in a house and the whole house burns down, no one will blame the lantern. Likewise, no one will blame the fire, since we understand that fire is meant to burn. However, we will condemn that person who lays even a finger on another person without cause, for they have the choice not to hurt the other person. Similarly, a house protects us from the cold, but no one has ever expressed gratitude to a house. In contrast, if one gives another person a shirt, that person appreciates the favor, for they know that the person had the power to choose to give them the shirt or abstain from doing so. Why is it, that if a child is burnt by a fire, no one blames the fire, but if anyone lays even a finger on the child, they are condemned for it? The reason for this is that fire has no choice, but a person can choose whether to hurt someone. In the same way, it is water's characteristic that it will cause someone to drown. Many people drown in the ocean, but no one blames the ocean because they know that this is the law of nature, and the ocean has no choice.

Thus, all rewards are tied with this ability to choose. Mankind has been given the capacity to choose, so that people may be rewarded. Only the one who is entitled to reward is held liable for punishment.

Sometimes, a child falls and he punches the ground, or some mothers will say, “Let us smack the ground. Why did it trip you over?" However, this is no more than a gesture to soothe the child. God says that man has been given the power of choice so that if he wishes, he can attain the best reward, or he will be deserving of His punishment. Many Muslim men and women declare that ‘We are as God Almighty made us, therefore there is no need for us to struggle.’ If this were true, then what right does God have to punish or reward any one of us? God created fire to burn and water to drown, and even an illiterate person would say it is an act of stupidity for someone to strike the fire for burning and the water for drowning. However, there are many women among you, who say that if it is their fate to go to hell, then they shall go to hell and if it is their fate to go to heaven, then they shall go to heaven. Therefore, why make any effort at all?

Water and fire acted according to their nature, so a woman who smacks them would be labelled insane. If God were to compel a person to do something, and then punish him for that action, would God not be labelled insane (God forbid)? After all, the person was only fulfilling his destiny. In this way, all robbers, thieves and gamblers are deserving of reward, for they only acted according to the destiny to which they were born. But God refutes this and declares that if He had exercised compulsion, there would have been no disbelievers. Is there anyone among you who would repeatedly beat someone [so that they would] curse you or strike your child? If none of you would act in this way, then why should the tongue and ears God has provided you with be used to abuse Him and His Messengers? When no one in this world would compel others to harm him, then why would God compel people to perform evil deeds? If God were to compel His people to do anything, He would compel them to act virtuously. Thus, this is an erroneous notion and God rejects it.

Misconceptions Regarding Destiny

The habit of attributing a child's illness to fate is more often found in women. For every misfortune, they blame destiny. I say, if every action happens according to destiny and a human has no say, then why does a woman cook bread? If it is destined to be, the bread will cook itself. Why does she cover herself with a quilt at night? If it is meant to happen, then all things will be accomplished on their own. Yet, no one behaves in this manner.

Once, when I was traveling from Lahore to Qadian, Pir Jama'at Ali Shah boarded the train at Lahore. The Promised Messiah[as] had once visited Sialkot, where Pir Jama'at Ali had declared a *fatwa* [edict], stating that whoever attended the Promised Messiah's[as] lectures or met him, would become a disbeliever. His wife would automatically be divorced from him, since it is a rule that if a man becomes a disbeliever, his wife is divorced from him. Once, an Ahmadi attended Pir Jama'at Ali's sermon and said to him, "You have seen my face. I am an Ahmadi; therefore, you are now a disbeliever, and your wife is now divorced from you." At this, the people in the room began to strike the Ahmadi. Anyhow, Pir Jama'at Ali asked me where I was going and I answered, "Batala." He asked again, "Specifically Batala, or somewhere else?" I replied that I was going to a village near Batala. He asked the name of the village and I answered, "Qadian." He asked, "Why are you going there?" I replied, "I live there." He then asked me, "Are you related to Mirza Sahib?" I answered, "I am his son." In those days, Pir Sahib was involved with an Ahmadi over some dispute, and he wanted me to tell the Ahmadi to drop the case. However, he did not suggest this straightaway, and instead sent for some dried fruit, which he offered me. I said, "I am suffering from a cold." He stated, "Only that occurs which Allah has destined." I replied, "If this is so, then you have made a grievous mistake by undergoing the suffering caused by this journey because if it was in your destiny, you would have reached your destination all on your own." Upon hearing this, he became silent.

Hence, destiny has been completely misunderstood. Allah says, "We do not make anyone a believer or infidel. A person becomes a grateful servant or disbeliever of his own accord. Since We have given

him the ability to choose, he will therefore be called to account." Thus, when a master tells a servant to carry out a task using his own judgment, he will call the servant to account.

Punishment for Disbelievers

God Almighty says in the [following verse]:

اِنَّآ اَعْتَدْنَا لِلْكٰفِرِيْنَ سَلٰسِلَاْ وَ اَغْلٰلًا وَّ سَعِيْرًا ۝

"Verily, We have prepared for the disbelievers chains and iron-collars and blazing Fire." (Holy Qur'ān, Ch. 76: V. 5)

Abstain from Customs and Bad Habits

What are these chains? They are the customs which are associated with one's nation. For example, even if they have no money, people will take out a loan in order to carry out the customs and rituals at their son's wedding. This is the chain which shackles a disbeliever and never leaves him. In contrast, the *momin* [believer] spends nothing on his *Nikah*. If he can afford it, he will distribute dried dates, and if he cannot, there is no obligation to do so.

Then, those habits which are of a personal nature are like chains [around one's neck]. Islam prohibits any addiction, whether it be to alcohol, tobacco, tea, or anything else. A person commits sins due to his addictions. In the time of the Promised Messiah[as], some of his relatives who opposed him, would gather together to smoke *hookah*. Those who were new addicts, would join them and they would all abuse the Promised Messiah[as]. Once, an Ahmadi joined this gathering and they presented him with some *hookah* and began to curse the Promised Messiah[as]. The Ahmadi felt greatly distressed at joining such a gathering. When they saw that he was quiet, they asked him why he did not say anything. The Ahmadi replied, "What can I say? I am scolding myself. If I was not in the habit of smoking, I would not have had to listen to this abuse." Thereafter, he vowed to never smoke again. Thus, addiction can force one into sin.

The Disbeliever's Envy

Then, *Sa'eer* is the fire which rages inside them and allows them no comfort. You see, when a believer describes the Unity of God before an idol worshipper, the latter feels anguish. Likewise, when a Jew says to a Christian, "It was your god, whom we crowned with thorns and caused to suffer in so many ways," the Christian burns inside. Consequently, the disbelievers also burn inside. Once a Jew said to Hazrat 'Umar[ra], "I am envious of your religion and I am green with envy, for there is nothing which this *Shariah* has neglected to address. If only these teachings were part of our religion!" Thus, this is that which burns inside them. In comparison, Allah recounts the state of a believer in this verse:

إِنَّ الْأَبْرَارَ يَشْرَبُونَ مِنْ كَأْسٍ كَانَ مِزَاجُهَا كَافُورًا ۝

"But the virtuous drink of a cup, tempered with camphor."

(Holy Qur'ān, Ch. 76: V. 6)

In other words, compared to disbelievers, the Noble God gives the believers a drink from a camphoric cup. Camphor has a cooling effect. Therefore, while a disbeliever's heart rages, a believer's disposition is calm; while a disbeliever burns, the believer is content that no other religion exists like his. Before him, lie the teachings regarding the Unity of God and the Word of God. When a Muslim reads in the Holy Qur'ān that Angels descend upon those who believe and they will receive revelations, they are overjoyed on how near they are to Allah. Only by following Islam, can one establish a relationship with Allah. In contrast, when a believer of the Vedas reads his book, how frustrated he must feel, believing that whereas God communicated with the original *rishis* of Vedas, He does not talk to him. [He wonders,] is he like a stepson to God? Thus, a believer is joyful while the nonbeliever feels envy.

To be of the Faithful, it is Necessary to Make Sacrifices

Yet, the believer receives that cup of camphor after great striving. Allah says:

عَيْنًا يَّشْرَبُ بِهَا عِبَادُ اللّٰهِ يُفَجِّرُوْنَهَا تَفْجِيْرًا ۝

"A spring wherefrom the servants of Allah drink – they make it gush forth – a forceful gushing forth."

(Holy Qur'ān, Ch. 76: V. 7)

When people accepted Islam during the time of the Holy Prophet[sa], they were killed. Hazrat Bilal[ra] was forced to lie on hot sand and was beaten, while nonbelievers would command him to say, "*Laat* is God," or such and such idol is God. However, Hazrat Bilal[ra] would only respond by saying, "There is none worthy of worship except Allah." Despite suffering so greatly, he never lost his faith. Thus, maintaining one's faith is no small matter.

The barriers to Paradise are difficult to remove and those who plough the canals of faith, commit great sacrifices. Here, the analogy of the canal is used, because digging one is done so with great difficulty. If a person was to dig a canal by himself, he could never do so. Now, if the men or women of our Jama'at believe that they will obtain faith without sacrifice, know that this is impossible. Faith requires much sacrifice.

There are two types of sacrifice: one is imposed by God and the other humans impose upon themselves. The first type of sacrifice, i.e., that which is imposed by God is, for example, when someone's child or spouse dies. A person has no hand in this; however, a person does have control in the other form of sacrifice. For instance, it is a sacrifice that a person makes when they become a believer, despite intense opposition from their brother, wife, or son. Such a person does not allow them to steer him away from the path of faith. That is ploughing the canal of faith.

Likewise is the case of a woman who accepts the truth, or a boy or girl who has recognized the truth and remains steadfast, without fearing the opposition. That is the canal which they have ploughed.

Among those who professed their faith as children, was Bhai Abdurrahman Qadiani[ra], who was formerly a Hindu. His father came

and took him away, locking him in a room for six months. One day, Bhai Abdurrahman[ra] found an opportunity and fled here [to Qadian]. Hence, to succeed [in digging] that canal of faith, one needs to make a huge sacrifice.

In a world where clothing, shoes, money, or for that matter any other thing, is not free, how can we expect a blessing such as faith to cost us nothing? The word 'canal' itself suggests that this is a difficult endeavor. God states that a believer is one who makes sacrifices. It is through these sacrifices that he progresses.

Qualities of Believers

Then Allah says:

يُوْفُوْنَ بِالنَّذْرِ وَ يَخَافُوْنَ يَوْمًا كَانَ شَرُّهٗ مُسْتَطِيْرًا ۝

"They fulfill their vow, and fear a day the evil of which is widespread."

(Holy Qur'ān, Ch. 76: V. 8)

This verse means, they fulfill their covenant with Allah and fear the Day of Judgment; a day which will come in this world, as well as in the Hereafter. First, you must make sacrifices and then you become a reflection of God in this world.

وَ يُطْعِمُوْنَ الطَّعَامَ عَلٰى حُبِّهٖ مِسْكِيْنًا وَّ يَتِيْمًا وَّ اَسِيْرًا ۝

"And they feed, for love of Him, the poor, the orphan, and the prisoner."

(Holy Qur'ān, Ch. 76: V. 9)

Just as God provides, they too provide people with food to the extent that whilst they may be needy themselves, they will give to the poor, the destitute, and the prisoners from their own food.

اِنَّمَا نُطْعِمُكُمْ لِوَجْهِ اللّٰهِ لَا نُرِيْدُ مِنْكُمْ جَزَآءً وَّ لَا شُكُوْرًا ۝

"Saying, We feed you for Allah's pleasure only. We desire no reward nor thanks from you."

(Holy Qur'ān, Ch. 76: V. 10)

They do not consider giving them food as having done them a favor and they do not make claims that, 'We favored you at such a time or offered you some charity.' Rather, they consider it a favor upon themselves that they were provided an opportunity to act righteously. They enjoy treating others well. Therefore, believers consider it a favor that they were given the opportunity to be grateful.

عَلٰى حُبِّهٖ

The words, *'ala hubbihi'* [for love of Him] mean that whatever a believer does, he does it for the sake of Allah, not for the sake of popularity. He carries out good deeds to please Allah and his only purpose is that his Lord be pleased with him.

What will the Believers Reap?

Additionally, there is another purpose behind the believer's benevolence, which is:

اِنَّا نَخَافُ مِنْ رَّبِّنَا يَوْمًا عَبُوْسًا قَمْطَرِيْرًا ۝

"Verily, we fear from our Lord a frowning and distressful day."

(Holy Qur'ān, Ch. 76: V. 11)

May Allah come to our assistance on that day which will be a very fearsome day. May Allah save us from those dangers and have Mercy on us. Regarding such people, Allah says:

فَوَقٰىهُمُ اللّٰهُ شَرَّ ذٰلِكَ الْيَوْمِ وَ لَقّٰىهُمْ نَضْرَةً وَّ سُرُوْرًا ۝

"So Allah will save them from the evil of that day, and will grant them joy and happiness."

(Holy Qur'ān, Ch. 76: V. 12)

Allah will treat these believers in such a manner, that they will remain safe on the Day of Judgment, and He will grant them a good reward. Allah goes on to say:

وَ جَزٰىهُمْ بِمَا صَبَرُوْا جَنَّةً وَّ حَرِيْرًا ۝

"And He will reward them, for their steadfastness, with a Garden

and a raiment of silk."

(Holy Qur'ān, Ch. 76: V. 13)

They will receive this reward due to their faith.

مُّتَّكِـِٔيْنَ فِيْهَا عَلَى الْاَرَآئِكِ ۚ لَا يَرَوْنَ فِيْهَا شَمْسًا

وَّ لَا زَمْهَرِيْرًا ۝

"Reclining therein upon couches, they will find therein neither excessive heat nor excessive cold."

(Holy Qur'ān, Ch. 76: V. 14)

They will all be kings. It will neither be hot nor cold there; it will be a new world. The description, 'of neither excessive heat' connotes that passions will not be aroused, and 'nor excessive cold' implies that passions will not diminish, but they will be of an unvarying nature.

The Wonders of the Holy Qur'ān

Observe how full of wisdom the Holy Qur'ān is. The Holy Qur'ān tells us that the punishment in hell comprises the torment of both the cold and heat. The people from cold climates have been warned of the agony of the cold and those from hot climates have been warned of the agony of the heat. In some countries, there is so much snow that their inhabitants make their houses out of ice. If they need to drink water, they rub ice together to make water and fire is considered a blessing there. The Bible only mentions the punishment of fire. Once a priest went to an ice-ridden country and while proselytizing said, "If you do not accept, God will throw you into the fire." The people replied, "O, will we be put in fire?" For them, fire was a blessing. Thus, when the priests realized that these people were not afraid of fire, they held a meeting in which they decided to replace 'fire' with "ice" in the Bible. However, the Holy Qur'ān does not require any human intervention, for it already warns of the torment of ice and thus, requires no changes. God states:

وَ دَانِيَةً عَلَيْهِمْ ظِلٰلُهَا وَ ذُلِّلَتْ قُطُوْفُهَا تَذْلِيْلًا ۝

"And its shades will be close over them, and its clustered fruits will

be brought within their easy reach."

(Holy Qur'ān, Ch. 76: V. 15)

Small Children in Paradise

Hazrat Khalifat-ul-Masih II[ra], after commenting on the other verses of this *rukū',* elaborated upon this verse:

وَ يَطُوْفُ عَلَيْهِمْ وِلْدَانٌ مُّخَلَّدُوْنَ ۚ اِذَا رَاَيْتَهُمْ حَسِبْتَهُمْ لُؤْلُؤًا مَّنْثُوْرًا ۝

"And there will wait upon them youths who will not age. When thou seest them, thou thinkest them to be pearls scattered about."

(Holy Qur'ān, Ch. 76: V. 20)

This verse refers to women, who will be pleased to know that the children who walk amongst them, are those same children whom they had lost. They will be as exquisite pearls, whose condition will never alter. In this world, children fall ill or suffer some physical deformity; some children are intelligent, while others are mentally slow. However, in Paradise, all children will be the same, scattered about like pearls."

How Ahmadi Ladies Should Behave

As the time had come for Hazrat Khalifat-ul-Masih II's[ra] speech in the men's Jalsa, he gave a brief commentary on the remaining verses, and concluded with, "Unless you act upon the teachings of Ahmadiyyat, you will not be worthy of being acknowledged as an Ahmadi. I want you to become perfect Ahmadis, so that if the time comes when we [the men] must leave you in the name of Allah's religion, you will be able to fully train our children. At this time, the world is immersed in ignorance. Understand the Holy Qur'ān and act according to Allah's commandments."

(*Misbah,* October 1945)

Some Important Points on the Education and Training of Ahmadi Women

Delivered by Hazrat Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad, Khalifat-ul-Masih II[ra]

May 1926

Lajna Ima'illah arranged a reception for Hazrat Maulvi Muhammad Din, muballigh [missionary] to America. Hazrat Khalifat-ul-Masih II[ra] delivered the following speech on this occasion.

Before this event, I had mentioned that a guest's wife should be invited along with him, and the women who invite him should sit on the other side of the partition in keeping with Islamic customs. In our Punjabi receptions, it is customary for the host to sit with his hands folded while the guests eat. However, the Islamic way is for the host to eat [with the guests].

European Culture is Attacking Islam

In the past several days, not after, but before my journey to Europe, I perceived that it is not the religion of the West which is attacking Islam but its culture. I wrote of this in an article at the time of my going to Europe. Their culture has evolved so much, that some negative things appear good, and some good things appear bad. Although our religion communicates the best teachings, it is a matter of them simply being left within the books, with Muslims failing to act upon their religion. Since Muslims do not implement it and [these teachings] are shut away in a book, we cannot claim to have inculcated them within us, nor are people prepared to believe us. We will be like the Aryans, who declare that the Vedas mentioned every new invention long before [it was created]. If we claim to Europeans that our religion includes all good teachings, they will laugh at us unless we practice them. I have already explained we should reject those European cultural customs, which are not in accordance with the Holy Qur'ān and *Hadith*. However, those which concur with the

Holy Qur'ān and *Hadith* should be adopted, unfortunately no attention was paid to this. Regarding this matter, women as opposed to men, are proving to be the obstacle. Women do not have enough courage to successfully oppose old customs and traditions. Albeit at this time, we have not fully decided to what extent women should work alongside men, however this much is obvious that Islam recognizes the need for an alliance between men and women to a certain degree.

Islam has prohibited the mixing of men and women to a certain extent, but according to a *Hadith*, if a man is riding and a woman is walking, then he should allow the woman to ride behind him. If a man can escort a woman to her home in such a manner, then how is it that men and women cannot work together in religious and national affairs? The time will come, and it will certainly come, when men and women will work together. We do not know if it will occur in our lifetime or in the future, but it will undoubtedly occur. In fact, there is a risk that if the rights which Islam has bestowed on women are not given to them, the boundaries Islam has set may be exceeded.

Mothers and the Training of Children

In his speech, Master Muhammad Din made the point that paradise lies under the feet of the mother. Aside from paradise of the hereafter even the paradise in this world lies beneath the feet of mothers. Nothing influences children more than their moral and educational upbringing and the mother is responsible for it. Women share a major responsibility for the enormity of problems we are facing regarding education and moral training. Women claim that they are held back and are not given any work. I am not blaming anyone, but the continuous oppression of women and their lowly state does not prevent me from stating that they themselves make no effort to lift their hands to assist us.

We are not saying that it is forbidden for women to be employed or to work outside, but there is no doubt that the greater part of women's work lies within the home. In Europe, where there is great freedom and available education, ninety percent of women

work at home, for it is impossible for large numbers of women to participate in business like men. That is unless it is decided that women will not marry or have children.

Thus, when European women advance so far in education, and continue to work at home, it illustrates that the primary objective of women's education is the training of children and running the house. This does not mean that sewing clothes and dressing children is their only duty. Rather, educating their children is also their responsibility. Women are also responsible for their children's religious education. So too are they responsible for their household duties which include keeping financial accounts, taking care of their health, being knowledgeable of their nutrition, enforcing punctuality, and understanding the health effects of sleeping, staying awake, light and darkness, and so on. A woman must supervise these matters at a time when the child is of an age where the impression upon the child will never fade, even if a lifetime of effort is exerted to do so. However, so far, our women are completely unaware of such matters.

The Need for Educated Women

The first requirement is to produce educated women, and this can only be done when we have female teachers. Men can only teach girls to a certain level, but not for long. Naturally when a girl becomes a young woman, it is necessary to develop a level of modesty in accordance with culture and tradition. This is not considered necessary in Europe, but we cannot ignore modesty.

Now on the one hand a girl must develop modesty but if at the same time she is taught by a male teacher her emotions and feelings will be suppressed, because she will be unable to express her ambitions and feelings according to her age in front of the male teacher in the same way as she would be able to do so in front of a female teacher. We need such teachers for these girls who will work seriously and diligently when needed but will also be able to laugh, participate in play and games, and cultivate in them a cheerful disposition. Men cannot nurture these attributes in them. Men will either cultivate such characteristics that we do not wish to cultivate

in girls, and which are not allowed in Islam, or they will become spiritless and the passion for life will be extinguished. Therefore, it is necessary to arrange female teachers for our girls.

Those women, for whom education has been separately arranged are in fact teachers, not simply students. Most of them are married and a few are unmarried; the majority of them are also already educated. Only a few are less knowledgeable. We expect those from among them who stay at home, to give their time to teach these girls at school, so that they advance in their education.

Strangely, it appears that in this world the foundation for everything is extensive, but when it comes to knowledge, the foundation is small, and continues to grow as one progresses. A student becomes more knowledgeable than his teacher because the student inherits knowledge and experience from the teacher. Hence, we can say, that although these women are not fully accomplished teachers, those who learn from them will advance beyond them. The next generation to learn from them, will advance even further. This is what occurred in Europe, and this can also occur here. We could educate them by keeping male teachers in schools, but we cannot achieve the kind of success we hope for, unless we have men to train female teachers. They will in turn teach the girls and [also] play and laugh with them. Successful training can only be accomplished when the teacher and student can play together, and this is not possible with men. Indeed, if these teachers are trained well, they can become the girls' tutors as well as their friends. Girls will be able to talk openly with them and absorb the shades of their character so that they develop a rich personality of their own.

We hope that with the Grace of God Almighty, these teachers ready themselves to complete the educational process of our Jama'at. Compared to others, we have more responsibilities given to us. Other people either prefer illiteracy in that they do not wish to educate their women, or they try to imitate the Europeans. We do not like illiteracy because the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] has said, "Wisdom is the lost property of believers, and should be acquired wherever found." On the other hand, we cannot follow Europe. Therefore, we must find a new way. I say 'new' because at this time, it is not

implemented. However, it is present in Islam already. Now we have begun the effort and even though it may start out on a small scale, everything which begins small at the beginning produces its final effect in due course. Many people had hoped to close down this *Madrassa* Ahmadiyya [Ahmadiyya School], which has accomplished so much. Now, those very same people ruefully proclaim:

رُبَمَا يَوَدُّ الَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْا لَوْ كَانُوْا مُسْلِمِيْنَ ۝

["*Often will the disbelievers wish they were Muslims"*]
(Holy Qur'ān Ch. 15: V. 3)

[Which means,] 'Alas! Would that we had done the same.'

Lahories are voicing their plans to make arrangements for maulvis. Hence, we are in the initial stages of arranging a system of education for women and we realize it is inadequate. However, if we do not begin the work, it will be left as it is. If the effort towards the education of women progresses as it is currently progressing, then God willing, there will be enough teachers ready within two or three years to enable us to even establish a girls' middle school. Those girls with a middle school education will be educated to prepare them as teachers for the entrance level and then from among those girls, some can continue onto higher education. We also need teachers who can teach nursing and medicine. For this reason, Chaudhary Ghulam Muhammad has sent his daughter to medical school and laid a good foundation. May Allah grant her the ability to finish and then we will have a trained female doctor here.

This is the beginning. If this work continues and women have courage, then we can achieve so much and God will also help them.

Women Should Work with Courage

Before she presented her address, the Lajna secretary, who is also my wife, endeavored to have me check her speech and improve upon it. However, I said I would not change a single word. I said to her, "You think that if your address contains mistakes, people will call you ignorant. However, men can also make mistakes and they do

make mistakes. Therefore, why are you afraid?" She was displeased, but I still did not edit her speech.

My thinking was that helping women in this way makes them cowardly. The only way women will successfully work, is if they work with strength and courage. It was the greatest lesson that Hazrat Khalifat-ul-Masih I, Hakeem Maulana Nur-ud-Din[ra] taught me when studying with him. Whenever I would ask him a question, he would say, "*Mian* [a term of endearment], carry on reading. When you go home, reflect upon this question for yourself." Hence, he would not let me ask any questions. Hafiz Roshan Ali had a habit of asking questions and while he would answer them, he would not answer my questions. Sometimes, when I would ask a question, he would look at Hafiz Sahib displeasingly, saying, "You have developed in him a habit of asking questions as well."

Women accuse us of not educating them and use this excuse for why they are behind in learning. I ask them, "Who educated us?" God did not collect all the knowledge [in the world] and reveal it to men, who in turn kept all of it for themselves and refused to share it with women. Men worked hard to learn, and they succeeded; you must make the effort to learn as well.

The fact of the matter is that although men did have advantages, women have even more advantages because men are willing to teach them. However, it is necessary for women to strive with courage. They should write articles and speeches. The worst that will happen is that a few people will laugh at their mistakes when reading their articles or listening to their speeches. However, the majority will appreciate their efforts and respect them. This is the best advice I can give to Lajna members. Besides this, I also wish to instruct the Lajna to increase their membership. The Lajna has not yet done anything about it. It is not necessary that only educated women become members. Rather, anyone who speaks and listens in a dignified manner, even if she cannot read a word, should become a member. The best work is done through cooperation, thus other women should be included in Lajna. Today, if the Lajna membership numbered fifty or sixty, they would all have been affected favorably in so many ways.

Now that the call for *Maghrib* prayer has been made and I have a sore throat, I will end my speech with this prayer. May Allah grant success to this part of our Jama'at and bestow His blessings upon them.

(*Al-Fazl,* May 15, 1926)

Address to the Students of the Women's Educational Institute

Delivered by Hazrat Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad Khalifat-ul-Masih II[ra]

This speech was given at a reception given by students of the 'Madrassah Khwateen' [Women's Education Institute], in honor of Mohatarram Sayyed Zain-ul-Abideen Waliullah Shah[ra] and his wife.

This Institution is a Tree of Knowledge Planted by Me

Anyone who sows a plant with his own hand, develops a natural fondness and love for it; especially those plants he believes will carry on his good name. Those who plant trees with their own hands come to hold them so dear, that they weep if the trees are cut down by natural disaster or by an enemy. These trees cannot speak, nor can they extol the virtues of the one who planted them although those who benefit from the tree, do say, 'God bless the person who planted it.' However, those trees of knowledge which speak, and carry on one's good name are twice as dear compared to other trees. Hence, I have a special love for '*Madrassah Khwateen*' and my heart yearns for it to achieve its purpose, that such female teachers are trained who will educate the best generations in such an exemplary manner that the graduates of this institute excel all other students. Due to this love and relationship, I feel I have the right to direct and advise this institution for its benefit. I am particularly pleased with the fact that our students

love and cherish their responsibilities and they understand that through education, they will progress academically and spiritually, making them more useful to our community.

Yet the sense of responsibility alone is no substitute for the actual accomplishment because no matter how great a person's desire or longing is, success cannot be achieved until the right means are used and implemented upon. You see, if a person makes an effort and struggles in order to draw water from a well during a winter night, this effort of his will not cook the bread! Why? Because the laws which God has necessitated for making bread have not been obeyed. Therefore, I believe our mission will only be fulfilled when we follow the rules established for this task.

One's Voice Should Resound with Power and Dignity

I feel that to advance the learning of the girls and women at this institution, the most critical point to keep in mind is to speak in a clear voice. It should be void of softness or hesitation and should be full of courage, determination, and authority. In my opinion, our women cannot succeed in achieving their work, until their voices resound with that authority and dignity which can be heard in the voices of those who are strongly determined to finish their work. It is the delivery of the speech which leaves the greatest impression. If the tone of the voice is filled with self-doubt and hesitation, and uncertainty over whether the audience will accept one's notions, then the voice will leave no impact.

We had a Maulvi Sahib amongst us, who despite being very knowledgeable spoke in a manner which suggested self-doubt. He would feel intimidated if someone challenged his arguments. Once he said to a man that the Holy Qur'ān contained thirty verses proving Hazrat Jesus'[as] death. He was asked to present any one of them. When he did, the person raised an objection to it and Maulvi Sahib replied, "Fine, forget that one. Here is another," and recited a second verse. The other person raised an objection to the second verse, so he recited a third one, and this continued until he had recited all of them. A commanding voice has a profound effect on its listener; thus, it is crucial for women to develop the habit of speaking with dignity and

command in their voices. However, despite my desire and my efforts in this direction, I have been unsuccessful. I now assign this task to Shah Sahib and hope that he will give this matter its due attention, even if he has not done so before. It has been brought to my notice that there are some students who have never answered questions in class and neither have the teachers demanded an answer from them. Mere education has no meaning. The Holy Qur'ān has compared it to a donkey. Until there is confidence, ambition and resolution, education is of no use. In order to be successful, one needs a voice which is clear, full of dignity, courageous, and commanding. I hope that the teachers at this institute will focus upon this and inculcate a habit of speaking courageously, promptly, and correctly within their students.

Since I stress on overcoming weaknesses and it is perceived as being strict, some women may be pleased at Shah Sahib's new appointment, believing they will be relieved of my severity. However, what they misinterpret as severity was actually in their best interests. As a child, I read a story of King Henry, who as a child was very mischievous. He was sent to be raised in a village. One day, he was brought before a magistrate and he misbehaved, taking advantage of the fact that he was the heir to the throne. The magistrate punished him for his poor behavior. When the King died and Henry became the king of the land, he called for the magistrate. The magistrate was afraid, unsure of how he would be treated. However, the King called him and said, "That incident left such an impact on me that I would like to appoint you to be the highest-ranking judge in my kingdom. Had I not learned to obey the law then, I would not be a king today."

In short, some guidance is painful, however the outcome is good. Women should not feel discouraged over these points but should progress academically, while facing these hardships.

Advice to the Teachers

Teachers should make sure that there is harmony amongst the entire student body. I expect that Shah Sahib will pay attention to this. Some girls are clever and intelligent and progress quickly, however when teaching a class it is necessary to ensure that the slow learners progress as well. The only way this can be done is to ask them more

questions and pay more attention to them. In my opinion, it is necessary to ask each person a question, and that each student be obligated to answer. I was surprised to discover that my daughter had never answered a question in her class. When I realized this, I immediately called her and firmly instructed her to give an answer when asked. I advise Shah Sahib to oblige those women who are not in the habit of speaking, to do so and to pay more attention to those who are weak in their studies. I have noticed this quality in women that if attended to, they can overcome their weaknesses rather quickly.

Another consideration is to ensure that women feel a need to use their knowledge. The only study we cannot overlook is grammar, and it is included in the upcoming syllabus. Students often try to avoid speaking a foreign language. However, when studying Arabic it is my hope that when Shah Sahib insists they answer in Arabic, the students will begin to reply in Arabic.

Now, their education has reached a point where they should be taught conversational skills. I was unable to give enough time to their education this year and I hope that Shah Sahib will fill this void. I also expect the students to make an effort. It is with regret that I have learned that the students are paying more attention to English. Although their English teacher, Hazrat Maulvi Sher Ali[ra] continues to insist that they pay more attention to Arabic, I have observed otherwise. Shah Sahib will have to ensure that the other party does not draw additional attention. It is my desire to lengthen the school day and that each teacher's course last for one-and-a-quarter to one-and-a-half hours, focusing on their conversational skills. Once they begin to speak conversationally and put together basic sentences, their attention will automatically increase. Arabic is learned either through grammar or through practice. Since the grammar is difficult, one easily becomes disheartened, whereas English is easier to learn and is therefore given more attention. The Arabic instructor must ensure that the students do not give up. I have asked women to translate short phrases in Arabic such as, 'Where is the notebook? Where is the book? Who picked up the book?'

If in the future, they are encouraged to practice short phrases relating to household conversations or about eating etc., they will

increase in their fortitude to continue learning. There are other ways too that a good teacher can utilize to teach a language.

The most important thing is to pay particular attention to Arabic. Although the other subjects are also important, our religious concerns are linked with the Arabic language, hence it is the most important. Yet, many students lose heart quickly and because it is difficult to learn in the early stages, they feel they cannot succeed. However, this stage of learning passes quickly and if surpassed it becomes easier, provided that there are Arabic speaking people around them. If not, then there are other scholars who know the Arabic language. Women students should not be afraid of the initial difficulties but should rather strive to reach a level of expertise where they can be considered an expert in the language and are easily able to read academic books.

With this instruction, I conclude my speech. I hope that Shah Sahib will ensure that those women who are weak in studies are not left behind, and that women do not fall behind in subjects only because the teachers do not pay enough attention. One should not take advantage of another's politeness. Remember, we have a grand objective, for which both men and women will work together. Women possess a sincere desire to work, but they are easily disheartened. Therefore, I advise you to continue your efforts with steadfastness.

Since the *Adhān* [call to prayer] for *Maghrib* has been already called, I will end my speech and pray for the host, because it is a *Sunnah* to pray for whoever has hosted a gathering. Given that this reception is hosted by the *Women's Education Institute*, I pray that God Almighty blesses these women with the opportunity to seek knowledge and then provide them with an opportunity to serve their religion.

(*Al-Fazl*, July 2, 1926, pp. 5-6)

Address to the Ladies at Jalsa Salana

Delivered by Hazrat Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad, Khalifat-ul-Masih II[ra]

December 27, 1926, at 3:00 pm

Hazrat Khalifat-ul-Masih II[ra] recited *Surah Yunus, rukū'* six and said:

Five years have passed since I launched the scheme (to collect donations) for the London Mosque, which included the donations for the Berlin Mosque. Now, I intend to appeal to the women to either assign their donations for the London Mosque or leave their money with us as a loan, so that we may use it to complete other projects for our community. We will work with whichever option they choose.

Importance of the Inauguration of a Mosque

The inauguration of this mosque has taken on such significance, that it will prove impossible to wipe its imprint from the history of the world. It appears that God Almighty has ordained that this mosque shall stand tall for all time, and He has made possible the means for its construction and its fame, increasing its prominence to the extent that I am left amazed. Firstly, God Almighty halted the progress of the [project] until my arrival in England. Subsequently, as soon as I arrived, the movement attracted astonishing recognition. It was unusual for the people of England to witness the arrival of the successor of a prophet. Consequently, every newspaper continually wrote about our stay and published several photographs.

Since I had gone there to lay the foundation of this mosque with my own hands, dignitaries such as Secretaries and Lords came to attend this very first occasion of the laying of the foundation. People were eagerly awaiting the completion of this mosque. Once it was near completion, many more opportunities arose to escalate its profile. For example, the suggestion to invite the son of Ibne Saud attracted quite a bit of publicity. Ibne Saud also agreed to this proposal and promised to send his son, *Ameer* Faisal, who is the Governor of Mecca. Since

Ameer Faisal came especially for the inauguration, it led to further publicity. Once *Ameer* Faisal arrived in England, it is narrated that the Indian mullahs sent telegrams. Similarly, a clamor was raised in Egypt against us. Telegrams were sent and his plans [to attend the opening ceremony of the mosque] were halted. His change in plans created an uproar in the whole of Great Britain, as they wished to know the reason behind this change.

Whatever could be the matter that *Ameer* Faisal travels from Mecca to England to undertake a certain duty, but he is prevented from doing so! There must be a special reason. The English like to investigate mysteries and as a result, people became more curious. They wished to see the mosque, the inauguration of which brought *Ameer* Faisal from Mecca, but which he was prevented from attending. In fact, this all took place according to the plans of God Almighty to provide our community with publicity without being obliged to anyone.

Furthermore, this mosque is so blessed that as soon as the inauguration was held, its blessings were revealed before us. Four English men accepted Islam on the day of the inauguration and two weeks had barely passed when another highly educated, young English man accepted Islam. He published a most exquisite article on Islam. His father began to persecute him, which is indicative of the realization that Islam was truly spreading. In the beginning, they viewed our project as a diversion, but now they realize that Islam is advancing. One local newspaper wrote that thousands of well-educated people are sensing the need to abandon Christianity, and the priests have also raised an uproar against us. Just today, we received a telegram that an Austrian minister has accepted Islam and has declared himself to be an Ahmadi Muslim. This week, six more English men have declared themselves to be Ahmadi. In short, since the inauguration, thirteen very prominent people have joined the fold of the Ahmadiyya Movement. That is to say, we have gained thirteen disciples. The Promised Messiah[as] has said that however the first Messiah was treated, we will encounter the opposite treatment. Therefore, I can say that there will be no Judas Iscariot among these thirteen disciples. (*Al-Fazl*, January 14, 1927, pp. 3-4)

Address to Lajna

Delivered by Hazrat Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad, Khalifat-ul-Masih II[ra]

March 22, 1927

The following speech was delivered on March 22, 1927, by Hazrat Khalifat-ul-Masih II[ra] at an event held by Lajna Ima'illah in honor of Sufi Ghulam Muhammad and his wife, Respected Ayesha Begum, on their return from Mauritius after twelve years.

Hazrat Khalifat-ul-Masih II[ra] said:

First, I would like to express my pleasure on the address given by the Lajna, which in many aspects, was far superior to previous addresses. Firstly, because it dealt with those subjects which are appropriate for an occasion such as this one. Secondly, it dealt with the issues in a simple, straightforward manner without any hesitancy, artifice, and without an unnecessarily prolonged discussion. If there was any weakness, it was in its delivery. It appears that women have not yet developed the confidence to speak in public without some apprehension. We still require more help and time.

While the devotees of Islam who go abroad and leave their households behind, inspire devotion in our hearts, I believe we should also cultivate a most important notion within ourselves, which is to develop the kind of courage these devotees demonstrate. It is only when we believe in this ideal, that we will be able to express our gratitude. It is wrong of us to appreciate that which is distant but ignore that which is close at hand. We hide our indolence behind the excuse of lack of opportunity. Otherwise, we can find many opportunities similar to those availed by the missionaries who travelled abroad and upon whose return we express such devotion and happiness. I draw the attention of my dear sisters and Lajna members to the fact that propagation does not require a trip to Mauritius, Europe, or America. These opportunities are available not

only in our own towns, but in our own homes. Regrettably, we have squandered these opportunities for quite some time.

Today, I particularly urge the Lajna members to begin preaching to our working-class women. If our women can forget Europe, America and Sumatra for the time being, and focus on winning over their domestic servants and other working-class women by exhibiting good morals, preaching, and showing kindness, then in eight to ten years, thousands of people will have gained guidance.

We should realize that it is just as important to bring these people to Islam as it is to bring those in Europe and America. By reason of humanity all are accorded that right, and all are worthy of respect.

Thus, begin this endeavor in your homes and within a month or two, show me what you have accomplished. This fruit will be no less sweet than those fruits which one dreams about.

May God Almighty grant the members of Lajna Ima'illah the ability to avail opportunities close to home which He has provided and make them the recipients of His infinite bounties.

(*Misbah*, April 1, 1927)

Cultivate Awakening and Realization Among Women

Delivered by Hazrat Mirza Bashir-ud-din Mahmud Ahmad, Khalifat-ul-Masih II[ra]

Women who become educated are unable to relate [appropriately] to other women because their education is of little use. Success cannot be achieved until all educated women consider other women as their mothers and sisters and try to improve their condition. It is imperative for our community to cultivate an awakening and realization amongst women and inform them that their lives are not merely to serve their husbands, but that they should establish the glory of God Almighty hand in hand with their husbands. I regret to say that despite repeatedly drawing attention to this matter, very little regard has been shown. So far, the condition of the women is very poor. Nonetheless, a clear difference exists between the condition of our women and others, and I do admit that the pace at which our women are progressing is very encouraging. A number of men and women have repeatedly informed me that a certain woman does not write her own essays, but has a man write them for her. However, today I received a letter from that same woman and her style of writing is the same as her essays. Her letter has the same passion and the same means of expression.

By the grace of God, our Jama‘at has such provisions available that our women are inclined towards advancement. The result of this very progress is that they now consider themselves a pillar of the religion. If this development continues, the women of our community will rapidly advance, but it is necessary that men should help them. It is the duty of every father to help his daughter advance. It is the duty of every husband to make arrangements for the progress of his wife. Similarly, every brother should help his sister. [We should encourage this] to the point that every son elevates his mother. Progress will be rapidly achieved if all the members of the Jama‘at begin to support their women in this way.

(*Misbah*, Qadian, February 1, 1928)

Letter to Women Regarding their Purdah

Written by Hazrat Mirza Bashir-ud-din Mahmud Ahmad, Khalifat-ul-Masih II[ra]

Dear…
As-Salamu 'Alaikum wa Rahmatullahe wa Barakatuhu.

In response to your letter dated January 23, 1928, I would like to state that currently, *purdah* is practiced in varying forms among Muslims. In some communities and in some areas, *purdah* is of such a nature that even a *doli* [a curtained carriage carried by men on shoulders to transport women] is veiled by curtains. Amongst other communities or areas, *purdah* is even more severe. In their eyes, a woman who enters her home [as a bride] in a *doli* should only leave upon her funeral. These practices of *purdah* are sheer atrocities, and they have a highly detrimental effect upon women's health, morals, knowledge, and faith.

This type of *purdah* is not found in the Holy Qur'ān or in the *Hadith*. It can be clearly deduced from the Holy Qur'ān, that women are permitted to go outside their homes. Were they not allowed to go outside, there would hardly be the need for the command of *Ghadd-e-Basar* [to keep one's eyes downcast]. History tells us that during the time of the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa], his own wives and daughters would go outside to go out onto the battlefields, to work on farms, to answer calls of nature, to seek knowledge or to teach. This was evidenced thousands of times and even the slightest account of history proves this to be true. Thousands of incidences prove that women did leave their homes.

Even human nature cannot accept that a man, who is naturally strong should require the outside air to maintain his good health, but a woman, who is naturally weaker should be deprived of it. It is even evident from *Hadith* that the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] would race against his wife, Hazrat A'ishah[ra] in the presence of others. Hazrat A'ishah[ra] won one race and the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] led the

other. Thus, if by customary *purdah* a severe form of *purdah* is indicated, then this *purdah* is extremely brutal and is a blemish on Islam and Muslims. The sooner it is removed, the better it will be for Islam and Muslims. Our generations have fallen weak due to this *purdah.* Our women have been deprived of both faith and worldly goods. We are derided by other nations and are presenting our religion to be an object of ridicule in the eyes of others.

In our country, one kind of *purdah* is the *burqa*, which women wear when they go out. They go from one house to the other, but they are not permitted to go any further. Although this *purdah* is not as objectionable as the other types of *purdah* mentioned above, it does not help to sufficiently improve women's intellectual growth or physical health for national progress. Secondly, our old *burqa* either destroys the woman's health or in the name of *purdah,* it actually becomes a cause for discarding *purdah* altogether. This *burqa* is like a walking dome from top to bottom, where even the woman's hands are enclosed inside. If she picks up a child, her entire front is exposed from head to toe, presenting such an unbecoming picture, that one instinctively feels abhorrence towards this type of *purdah*. Far better than this, is the practice of wearing the *chaadar* [a long shawl] which existed before the invention of the *burqa*. A woman could go about her work and cover herself up as well. As I have mentioned above, this *burqa* is detrimental to health and does not serve the purpose of *purdah*.

In my opinion, the new *burqa*, known as the Turkish *burqa*, is by far the most preferable among *burqas*, excepting one alteration, that it is not wrapped around the body. It should be a straight coat, which falls from the shoulders to the feet, and it should not be the type of coat which displays individual parts of the body. If this kind of clothing was permissible, then one's clothes would have been sufficient, and the Holy Qur'ān would not have given the command to wear loose garments over them. There is the additional benefit to this *burqa*, that since the hands are free, a woman can do all sorts of work. A similar example would be a doctor's loose coat which he wears during surgery.

The Holy Qur'ān has mentioned one rule regarding *purdah* and that rule is that *purdah* is necessary for women:

إِلَّا مَا ظَهَرَ مِنْهَا

"...except that which is apparent thereof..."

(Holy Qur'ān, Ch. 24: V. 32)

There are only two characteristics which are *apparent thereof*, height and one's body. However logically speaking, it is obvious that depending on a woman's work or the needs of her time, that which is apparent thereof is not included in *purdah*. Therefore, in accordance with this rule, a doctor checks the pulse of a woman, since illness compels that it be made apparent. If there is skin disease on her face, the doctor will need to examine the face. If there is an internal disease, he will examine the tongue. Hazrat A'ishah[ra] relates that during one battle, we used to fetch water and our shanks were exposed. At that time, the baring of shanks did not go against the Holy Qur'ān and was actually in accordance with this Qur'ānic teaching. As they were an essential part of battle, it was necessary for women to work and as a result of running, their shanks were inevitably exposed. At that time, it was customary to wrap a mantle around the lower body, instead of wearing pajamas. In accordance with the same rule, if a household's activities are such that women are required to work outside in farms or fields, then it is absolutely necessary that their eyes and surrounding areas be exposed. Therefore, according to:

إِلَّا مَا ظَهَرَ

["…*except that which is apparent*…"]

(Holy Qur'ān, Ch. 24: V. 32)

it is completely acceptable for them to leave the area from the forehead to the mouth uncovered, and according to the injunction of *purdah,* they cannot perform their duties without doing so. Therefore, it is permissible for women to expose those areas of the face deemed necessary to carry out the duties of their daily life or when necessitated by a hardship, provided that the hardship is genuine. Indeed, exposing that area [of the face] would be in line with the directive of *purdah*. However, if a woman's work does not compel her to go out and work in the open fields, covering her face is included in *purdah*, as is clearly stated in the *Hadith*.

A person came to the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] and said, "I would like to marry a certain woman. I do not know what she looks like and her father refuses to show me her face." The Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] replied, "For the purpose of marriage, it is permissible to see the face." When that man went back to the girl's father and related the Holy Prophet Muhammad's[sa] response, the father still considered it as an insult and refused to show him his daughter's face. The girl, who was listening inside the house, came out with her face uncovered, and said, "When the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] has allowed him to look at my face, how can we refuse?" If it had been permissible for all women to leave their faces uncovered, then this question would have never been raised. Similarly, it is narrated that one evening, the Holy Prophet[sa] was walking on a side street with his wife Hazrat Safiyah[ra]. He saw two men approaching from the opposite side. For some reason, he felt that the men harbored a suspicion within their hearts that he may be with another woman. The Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] uncovered the face of his wife and said, "Look, this is Safiyah[ra]." Had the injunction instructed that the face remain uncovered, the possibility of such a risk would have been unlikely.

Similarly, it is narrated that when Hazrat A'ishah[ra] led the forces in the Battle of Siffin, and her litter [a curtained seat upon a saddle of an animal] was thrown off when its ropes were cut, one evil natured *Kharijite* [a group of Muslims who disagreed with Hazrat Ali as *Khalifa* and withdrew from following him] lifted the curtains and said, "O! This is a woman with a red and white complexion." If it were customary for the wives of the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] to leave their faces uncovered, then when she had been leading the forces from her litter, he would have already sighted her, and it would not have come as a surprise to him. Similarly, many such instances can be found to support the injunction that certain classes of women should cover their face as much as possible. One verse of the Holy Qur'ān also bears testimony to this fact:

وَ لۡيَضۡرِبۡنَ بِخُمُرِهِنَّ عَلٰى جُيُوۡبِهِنَّ

"And they draw their head coverings over their bosoms."

(Holy Qur'ān, Ch. 24: V. 32)

Khimār does not refer to an ordinary shawl or dupatta [long head

scarf], but rather is the name of a scarf which women wear on their heads while working. Thus, it does not mean that part of a dupatta should be stretched over your chest, for a khimār does not have a side. It is short. This means that you should lower the scarf from the head, so that it covers the chest. This suggests that a person approaching from the front should not be able to see your face.

To an extent, the question of *purdah* is also related to the mixing of men and women. Regarding this, it can be ascertained from the Holy Qur'ān and *Hadith* that keeping the rules of *purdah* in mind, a woman can work alongside men in all kinds of matters. She can learn from men, listen to their lectures, give lectures, she can sit separately from men during gatherings, sermons, and lectures. When needed, she can express her opinion and present arguments. Additionally, it is necessary to consult women in matters which pertain to them.

In times of need, a woman can sit with a man. As the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] said, "If a person is riding an animal and sees a woman, he should let the woman sit behind him." According to the customs in our country, if a person acted in such a way, the entire nation might boycott him. However, the laws of *Shariah* were conferred to us thirteen hundred years ago and no one can change them.

In accordance with this statement of the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa], I give this decree, that if a ladies' carriage [in India, the men and women sit in separate compartments] is in danger, the men should let the women sit with them in the gents' carriage. Or a woman should go alone and sit in the gents' carriage if she feels her dignity is better safeguarded in the presence of noble men rather than in sitting alone in a carriage by herself. At this time, I have dictated as many examples as possible which readily come to mind. Should you need to inquire furthermore, please do so.

Mirza Mahmud Ahmad,
Qadian

(*Misbah,* 1 April 1928)

A Clarification of Islamic *Purdah*

Delivered by Hazrat Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad, Khalifat-ul-Masih II[ra]

(By an Al-Fazl reporter)

Dalhauzi, June 29, 1928 – After Friday prayer, Sheikh Abdul Ghafoor, a medical student asked:

What are the limits of Islamic *purdah*?

Hazrat Khalifat-ul-Masih II[ra] responded:

Maximum *purdah* is covering the face except for the eyes and covering the clothes which lie close to the body. Other than that, under the allowance of:

إِلَّا مَا ظَهَرَ

"...except that which is apparent ..."

(Holy Qur'ān, Ch. 24: V. 32)

whatever part remains exposed due to force of circumstance, is permissible. For example, a female farmer is unable to till the soil and perform other farming work with a veil covering her face. Hence, it is permissible for her to expose her hands and face in order to work. However, those ladies who do not do such work, but rather go out for a stroll, should cover their faces.

Nowadays, the way *purdah* is discussed is not appropriate. An attempt is being made to derive a different meaning from the Qur'ānic verse, which includes the injunction on *purdah*, even though the meaning they wish to draw from this verse cannot be derived. Yet we should look upon the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] and his companions[ra] to see how they interpreted it and how they acted upon it.

When we delve deeper, we find that covering the face was included in *purdah*. It has been clearly written that when the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] suggested that his grandson marry, he sent a

woman to see the girl's complexion. If at that time, the face was not covered, then why send a woman to see the complexion? Similarly, Hazrat 'Umar[ra] said to a woman, "Umme Hani, I have recognized you." This suggests that he recognized her from her walk and not by her face. Saying, 'I have recognized you by your face' to a familiar acquaintance is no great feat.

Likewise, once when the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] was observing '*Itikaf* [seclusion for prayers in the last ten days of Ramadhan], one of his wives came to visit. Evening time approached and when he was escorting her home, he came across two men. They were most likely hypocrites, and in order to prevent any ill thoughts on their part, he removed the veil from his wife's face and said, "This is my wife, who is with me." Had it been customary to leave the face exposed, there would be no need for the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] to uncover his wife's face as he did.

Similarly, a man said to the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa], "I would like to marry a certain girl, but I do not know what she looks like." The Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] responded, "Seeing her is permissible. You may see her." That man went to the girl's father and told him this. Her father said that he was not ready to show his daughter. The daughter, who was also listening to the conversation, said that if the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] had allowed it, then why stop him. If the girl was out and about with her face exposed, why ask the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] in the first place, and then ask the girl's father?

There are many incidents of this kind that indicate that women did not walk around with their faces exposed. Indeed, they did go out to work, talk to men, and partake in wars.

The truth of the matter is that unnecessary coercion regarding *purdah* has resulted in the attempt to extinguish it completely. I myself, have seen women brought in a *doli* surrounded with curtains as she boarded the train. This was unnecessarily harsh, but it is also dangerous to pervert the actual issue. In this way, damage is done to Islam. If our opponents state that Islam commands us to observe *purdah*, but we do not, that is another matter. It will be assumed that

just as people do not follow many other religious injunctions, so too is the case here. Once it is understood that Islamic *purdah* is in no way detrimental, but rather is beneficial, people will begin to observe it. However, to say that the injunction of *purdah* does not even exist in Islam, is to attack Islam. It cannot be expected of those, in whose minds this concept has been imprinted [that the concept of *purdah* does not exist within Islam], that they will ever be able to justly adhere to true *purdah.*

I call the current *purdah* a political *purdah* because circumstances are such. In British law, the price for chastity is monetarily set, which is why it is important to be cautious, otherwise women would be able to walk freely under a Muslim government.

In Arab countries, I have seen women shopping in the marketplace. The men there say that the women do not like the shopping the men do for them. The women say that men are not familiar with the clothes women prefer to wear, nor are they aware of the other things women buy, therefore they go out and shop for themselves.

Sheikh Abdul Ghafoor: I asked Maulvi Muhammad Ali about *purdah*. He answered, "My heart truly wishes that women could walk without covering their faces, but I do not have the strength to carry this out yet. I wish that Allah enables me to enforce Islamic *purdah,* or in other words, keep the face exposed." Maulvi Sahib corroborated this by saying that if the face was not meant to be exposed, then the Holy Qur'ān would not have commanded men and women to lower their gaze.

Hazrat Khalifat-ul-Masih II^{ra}**:** The eyes and a little bit of the area around it can be exposed, which is why it is commanded to lower their gaze.

Sheikh Abdul Ghafoor: Can women go to the marketplace to get groceries?

Hazrat Khalifat-ul-Masih II^{ra}**:** If there is no danger, they can. The current *burqa* is very uncomfortable, and I do not like it. The

Egyptian style of *burqa* is comfortable. It is said that *purdah* is the reason that women are unable to progress, and their health is poor, but this is not true. What does a woman who does not observe *purdah* achieve, which a woman who practices *purdah* does not achieve? When women used to observe *purdah* in accordance with Islamic commandments, their health was good, they participated in wars, and defeated enemies. Yet now unveiled women are not accomplishing anything of the sort. The reality is that health is maintained due to hope and ambition. If someone does not have ambition, even if you place her on the peak of a mountain, she will only sink lower and lower. [However], if one has hope and motivation, then even if you enfold her within a quilt, she will only grow stronger and stronger.

Kalilah [a book of animal fables] narrates the story of a mouse. There was once a man who was complaining to his friend about a mouse who was getting into his things. The friend suggested that the man place [his things] higher up. To which, the man making the complaint, replied that the mouse still got into his things, because the mouse would just jump even higher. The friend responded, "There must be some reason. I recommend that you dig out the mouse's hole." When he dug out the hole, he found money, and he took it. Later, when the mouse came out, he was half dead and could not even walk properly. The example given is of a mouse, but humans behave very similarly. They are able to feel resolute and zealous over any ideal.

Compared to the veiled women living in Arab countries what can these bare-faced women achieve? The fact is that women in Arabia are free in their country, therefore they are powerful and strong, even with the commandment of *purdah*. What is needed is to improve upon the current *purdah*. As long as this [oppressive] *purdah* exists, the opponents of *purdah* will have the upper hand. This reformation can only be achieved when women are educated and they themselves practice *purdah* in accordance with the Islamic code. While observing *purdah*, they should work, they should keep healthy, and they should inform other women that while maintaining *purdah*, all kinds of progress is possible. The words of such women can influence other women. It is not as effective when men advise them of this because women reply, "You stay outside the home. How would you know the hardships of *purdah*?"

In my opinion, it is also cruel to force girls to wear a *burqa* from a very young age. This has a harmful effect on their health, and they are unable to attain a good height. The girl should be made to observe *purdah* when she approaches puberty.

(*Al-Fazl,* July 6, 1928)

A Further Conversation on *Purdah*

Delivered by Hazrat Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad, Khalifat-ul-Masih II[ra]

Close to the time of *Maghrib* prayers, Mr. Musharraf Hussain MA, Delhi Inspector of Post Offices, came to have an audience with Hazrat Khalifat-ul- Masih II[ra]. They spoke of the ruin of the royal families of Delhi and the destruction of old learned families. Thereafter, Inspector Sahib sought Hazrat Khalifat-ul-Masih II's[ra] viewpoint on the issue of *purdah*. In response, Hazrat Khalifat-ul-Masih II[ra] referred to a talk he gave to a medical student a few days earlier, which had been published in *Al-Fazl*. A copy of the *Al-Fazl* was given to Inspector Sahib and Hazrat Khalifat-ul-Masih II[ra] further elaborated upon this conversation:

"When regarding matters which relate to deeds, people should look to the actions of those who were originally addressed, rather than arguing over statements. In regard to *purdah,* we should look at the practice of the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] and his companions[ra]. It shows that *purdah* included the face. There are incidents related in the *Hadith* which support this. These accounts are not specifically related in support of *purdah*, lest one may infer that the personal opinion or inclination of the narrator has a role to play. Rather, these accounts have been mentioned when recording other incidents. Hence, they are decisive with regards to *purdah*, for these events were not recorded with the issue of *purdah* in mind, but they were simply narrating daily routines. Therefore, covering one's face is supported through *Hadith* and Islamic history."

Inspector Sahib: "What is your view on:

اِلَّا مَا ظَهَرَ

"...except that which is apparent..."?

Hazrat Khalifat-ul-Masih II[ra]: "It means that which is apparent, that which cannot be hidden out of necessity, because circumstance renders it necessary, such as one's height. Or in terms of an illness, one must expose a part of the body for treatment, or in regard to one's job, baring a part the body if required.

The Holy Qur'ān's directive is to cover the beauty and the most beautiful part is one's face. For those who claim that covering one's face has not been commanded, I ask them, what is beauty then that has been ordained to be covered? We prefer that the face be veiled to the extent that it does not affect one's health. For instance, that the veil be made of thin material, or that a veil of Arabic style be made. In Arab areas the veil is made so that the eyes and part of the nose remains exposed."

(Dalhauzi, July 9; *Al-Fazl,* July 17, 1928; Number: 5, Volume: 16)

The Women of the Ahmadiyya Jama‘at Should Take Note

Written by Hazrat Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad, Khalifat-ul-Masih II[ra]

I announced before that as it had become impossible to build a mosque in Berlin due to lack of funds, a mosque has been built in London using the donations from women. I asked the women if they would like to claim this [London] Mosque on their behalf, or if they would prefer that men pay its cost and another mosque in another country be built on their behalf. Since the women did not respond, I have gathered that the women of our Jama‘at are satisfied that they be attributed to the London Mosque, which now carries worldwide fame. In my opinion, keeping in mind London’s importance as the center of Christianity, it is appropriate that a mosque is built by women. This is because it becomes a practical answer to allegations made by Christianity whereby they claim that Islam violates women’s rights. However, I will once again pose this question in the coming *Shura* [The Ahmadiyya Muslim Community’s advisory council] meeting. Until then the sisters should continue to ponder over whether they would like the London Mosque to be attributed to them, or whether, when the time comes for another mosque to be built in America or another European country, they would like that mosque to be built on their behalf.

At this time, I would like to draw women’s attention to another matter. Due to the building of this mosque, *tabligh* efforts have picked up quite a bit and by the Grace of God Almighty, this work is now beyond the capacity of two people. Earlier, Sheikh Yaqub Ali Irfani brought this to my attention from England. He wrote that the drawback is that many important projects are discontinued after their initiation, therefore, the expected advantages do not materialize. Later, some other friends also brought this matter to my attention. Now, Khan Sahib Maulvi Farzand Ali also wrote a letter stating that the work appears quite substantial, and it will be necessary to increase the staff.

To build a mosque and then not appoint a proper team of

workers is indeed a waste of the money which was spent earlier. Therefore, I have suggested that another missionary be sent there. This time, I would like to try something new, which is to appoint a missionary from amongst the new converts of England, rather than sending one from India. In my opinion, it has many advantages. Firstly, there will be someone from among the English who is familiar with the religion of Islam. Secondly, as he understands the thinking of his co-nationals, he will be able to facilitate propagation. Earlier, I intended to bring over an English man and train him, but now I feel that he should work there for some time and then be called here, if appropriate. In this way, we can assess from his experience whether he is even capable of undertaking this work. This will save us from the pain of training him and then letting him go.

Since we do not have room in our budget and since women should also participate an appropriate amount in *tabligh* efforts, I have decided that this extra expense be borne by our women. The estimate for this expenditure is four thousand rupees annually. Moreover, Khan Sahib's letter indicates that due to insufficient funds in the last four years, the UK mission is in debt. At present, this debt is about five thousand rupees. Many invoices have not been paid and for this reason, the work has been adversely affected.

Fundamentally, this is a serious flaw. When the expenditure exceeded the approved budget, a request [for additional funds] was not immediately registered. Since the mistake is already made and the expenditure is genuine for the needs of the movement, we must accept it. However, since there is no room in our budget, I would like our women to take on the responsibility of this extra expenditure. This year, they should submit a total of nine thousand rupees for miscellaneous expenses. In the coming years, God willing, they will only have to assume the expenses of the additional missionary and as of now, that is estimated to be four thousand rupees.

I put forward this scheme before the Ahmadi women in Qadian, and by the Grace of Allah Almighty, the women of Qadian as usual have showed their utmost devotion and have pledged another one thousand rupees, from which six hundred rupees have been collected as cash or jewelry. Now with this essay, I expand this

campaign, and I hope that Ahmadi women in other places will not lag behind their Ahmadi sisters of Qadian, remembering that believing men and believing women can never feel comfortable in trailing behind when it comes to virtuous and righteous deeds. By the Grace of Allah Almighty, our Jama'at's women can accomplish much, as is evidenced by the work of Ahmadi women in Sialkot, who are successfully running a girl's school. Likewise, they are holding a convention on the June 17th in Lahore and Amritsar, despite opposition, which shows their increased courage.

Wherever they may be, Ahmadi ladies should hold meetings as soon as possible to raise this money and send it in immediately in order that the work may commence. Where there is no Lajna or where it is not customary for women to gather, the secretaries on the men's side should facilitate women's gatherings, and in this way, they may also share in the blessings. I would also like to say that women should make the donation themselves, either as cash, or in the form of jewelry and in no way should they ask men for this *chanda*. They should not feel embarrassed if they can only donate a small amount of money. God looks at the heart and not at the amount. If they serve with devotion, Allah Almighty will enable them to collect more than what is asked, becoming a model for future generations and heirs to eternal blessings.

I would also like to relate that at the time of the Berlin Mosque's proposal, some non-Ahmadi women also wished to participate in donating money towards it. It was not allowed, since at that time, the condition was that only Ahmadis were to give this *chanda*. Some women even accepted Ahmadiyyat for that purpose. Since that work must continue permanently, the condition was imposed that only Ahmadi women could contribute to this *chanda*. However, now that this *chanda* is for general preaching projects, this condition is not needed. If a non-Ahmadi sister happily wishes to participate in this *chanda*, her donation will be accepted with pleasure. As the project must begin urgently, I would therefore once again, enjoin you to act promptly.

Humbly,

Mirza Mahmud Ahmad, Khalifat-ul-Masih, October 17, 1928

An Address to Lajna

Delivered by Hazrat Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad, Khalifat-ul-Masih II[ra]

On December 1st, Lajna Ima'illah Qadian arranged a tea party in the honor of the respected Maulvi Abdur Rahim Dard MA, Missionary in England, and presented an address in his honor. After the address, Maulvi Sahib delivered a speech, after which Hazrat Khalifat-ul-Masih II[ra] gave the following discourse.

Hazrat Khalifat-ul-Masih II[ra] stated:

First, I would like to draw Dard Sahib's attention to a responsibility I believe he has. Although his time to speak has passed, he can however acknowledge in his heart the error of excluding women from the term '*Adamiyyat*' [the Urdu word for humanity derived from the name Adam] in his speech. Women hold the same status in humanity as Dard Sahib does or we do. If human beings are called '*Adami*' [human] because they are the progeny of Adam, then Dard Sahib does not have a right to consider himself an *Adami* [Urdu word usually connoting men] whilst excluding women from 'mankind'. However, I also believe that women have contributed to this [mistake of considering themselves excluded from the term '*Adami*'] as well because they will say, 'Observe *purdah*, for *Adamis* have arrived,' or other statements of this nature. As they exclude themselves from '*Adamiyyat*', therefore Dard Sahib has also erred in doing so.

The matters discussed by Dard Sahib at this time could prove to be very beneficial, but there is one thing which is ignored by lecturers who make such exhortations, and that is that they always look towards the upper class of England and not towards the lower class or those who are impoverished. There is no doubt that the educated class of Europe is better off than the educated class here, but I have seen other groups of boys and girls whose hair is disheveled, and their faces are grimy and soiled. I have seen such children in Italy as well as in

England. In reality, education and financial status play a large part in one's cleanliness and training. In our country, to love a child is to turn him into a good-for-nothing, whereas in those countries, it entails in making them useful.

This is a malady in our country where parents try to ensure that their child bears no hardship, even though the hardship a child faces during training, is actually a source of comfort for him. This is because if today we do not inculcate the habit of hard work within a child and do not teach him good morals, then he will inevitably grow up to suffer greatly and we ourselves will be responsible for that suffering.

Thus, from the very beginning, we should strive to raise our children in a moral manner and inculcate the highest qualities in them. We should undoubtedly acknowledge that the people of those countries have some advantages due to their country's circumstances. However, we must also rectify that weakness which is our own fault or is due to our own negligence. For example, there is an alarming weakness in our country's children, which is that each one of them wishes to eat something separately. In this way, the item is consumed in excess and secondly, children develop the habit of extravagance. Moreover, their digestive system becomes upset. Yet, eating separately is quite common within our country. A person will invite a guest over, serve them the food and then disappear, perceiving it to be an insult if he were to eat with the guest.

Likewise, inside the home, the wife will spread out the tablecloth and serve her husband with his dinner, and then run off to do other errands. They do not even sit together to eat. If you sit and eat together the food will not be wasted and order will be maintained as well.

To rectify this, mere lectures are of no help. Moral training is required. For this, a modus operandi [rules of practice] should be made for the nation. A book should be prepared which covers how women should train children so that women may read and act upon it. It would be impractical to expect a person to store those copies of *Al-Fazl* or Review of Religions [publications of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community] for reference where they have marked those articles

which cover moral training for children, and then to constantly refer back to them, to read them and act upon the advice contained within them.

However, if these topics were collected in one volume and such a book was made part of the women's syllabus or women read it for themselves and then implement it, it could prove to be very valuable. However, until such a book is compiled, women should try to act upon these matters themselves. At present, we have asked women to pay attention towards education, after which God willing, attention will be paid to *tarbiyat* [moral training] as well. After a person is educated, they can understand how precious children are and how important their training is. My intention is to expand the present girls' school to a high school. *Chanda* is being collected for this purpose and it is expected that within three to four months, we will be able to purchase land for the girls' high school. Some aid will be received from the government and more funds will be collected through *chanda.* God willing, we will be able to lay the foundation in 1929. Those Lajna members who are being educated, will assist in teaching at the school, even if at present they may be unable to assist in training.

In my opinion, the matter to which we should direct more of our attention is education, and in particular religious education. Only this education will instill some sense and understanding in our children. I am so discontented by the present ways of our youngsters that I wish every element of Europe could be changed. One's head bows in shame and regret to see the people in our country so obsessively copy European customs. Today, Dard Sahib stated that those habits which Europe has abandoned due to discontentment, those habits are being gladly and enthusiastically adopted by the people of our country. Yet, I have been saying for the past ten years that the issues which Europeans have raised their voices against, those very issues are considered a source of progress by the people of our country.

There is an uproar there against *interest* and here efforts are being made to introduce it. Similarly, people there are pushing to control alcohol, whereas here a great interest is being shown towards

[consuming] it. Thus, in imitating Europe, people have become blind. In order to safeguard ourselves and others as well, we should make others realize that our culture is neither defective nor feeble. The flaw is that it has not been properly practiced.

Consider the [following] notion. A color only appears beautiful up to a certain degree. For example, the color blue or black is only used to a certain extent when painting a picture, so that the view of the sky is shown. However, if the bottle of blue or black paint is poured over it, then it would not create beauty; rather it would create ugliness. Similarly, clouds are painted white in a picture, but if someone brushes the whole paper with white paint, then it would be ignorance. Thus, we have created defects by misusing our culture which in itself is not defective. Take the example of *purdah* for women. If anyone adopted freedoms to the extent that the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] himself gave to women, there would be an uproar against him. The Prophet Muhammad[sa] stated that if a man is riding and a woman is walking, he should ask her to ride behind him. Nowadays, if someone acted in such a manner, there would be a great outcry despite the fact that the Holy Prophet[sa] declared this as an act of charity and a man's responsibility.

In short, incorrect practices have created defects and they should be reformed. Women should be given however much freedom Islam has granted to them. For example, they should go out, take part in work, attend meetings, but they should do so in the manner which Islam has instructed, and which has been practiced. Here progress has taken place to the extent that while observing *purdah* women now deliver lectures. Muslim women who do not observe *purdah* and have not yet developed the courage to do so. Thus, women should be given freedom to the degree that Islam has bestowed on them, and that is the best and most advantageous freedom for them. They should not step beyond that.

I like the new style of *burqa*, for women can walk more freely in it. However, some have started to use it improperly, making it into a coat which reveals the figure. Hence, it becomes unlawful. Why has the *Shariah* prescribed wearing the *Jilbab* [an outer garment]? Why not a shirt on its own? The reason is so that the figure of the body is not displayed. Loose clothing should be worn. Due to its improper use,

the *burqa* cannot be blamed. However, the weakness which has developed must be remedied.

Thus, it is necessary to reform these shortcomings. Nothing should be imitated blindly. Islam is neither of the East nor of the West, so Muslims should neither copy Asia nor the West. Therefore, do not blindly follow anyone; Asia is not continuing the type of *purdah* which is customary there, nor is Europe in discontinuing *purdah*, because it is not observed there. Instead, we should avoid both extremes and tread upon the right path.

(Al-Fazl, December 11, 1928: Number: 47, Volume:16)

Address to the Ladies at the Occasion of Jalsa Salana

Hazrat Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad,
Khalifat-ul-Masih II[ra]

December 1928

After the recitation of *Tashahhud* and *Surah Al-Fatihah*, Hazrat Khalifat-ul-Masih II[ra] stated:

I consider it an immense Grace of God that He has enabled me to speak today. If due to illness my voice does not reach anyone, she should not leave. Her reward is based on intention. If she sits with the intention to listen, then the voice will reach her. Regardless, if the intention is there, then at least she will attain her reward.

These gatherings are held for the sake of the religion of God. Thousands, or actually millions of people travel to Mecca every year and return after performing Hajj. Some return after making the circuit around the Ka‘bah, whereas others return after performing ‘Umrah, for they do not have the opportunity to perform Hajj. Nonetheless, God Almighty has declared Hajj a grand occasion. No speech is given there, no lecture, no discourse. Only one sermon is given, which may be heard by a few hundred individuals. God has endowed great honor to Hajj. Several people return, having engaged merely in idle talk yet

everyone regards them with honor, respect and calls them ‘Hajji Sahib’ [a person who has performed Hajj] only because they undertook the journey in the way of God and suffered hardships for the sake of God. Thus, undertaking a journey in the way of God is a blessing in itself. Every individual who with pure intentions, travels to the place where God has manifested His glory, and does so with pure intentions, arrives back inheriting His special blessings.

God Almighty sees the sacrifices:

لَنْ يَّنَالَ اللّٰهَ لُحُوْمُهَا وَ لَا دِمَآؤُهَا وَ لٰكِنْ يَّنَالُهُ التَّقْوٰى مِنْكُمْ ؕ

“Their flesh reaches not Allah, nor does their blood, but it is your righteousness that reaches Him.”

(Holy Qur’ān, Ch. 22: V. 38)

Which means, the meat or the blood of the sacrifice does not reach Him, for He desires purpose and intention. Thus, every action an individual undertakes which is righteous or carries righteous intentions in which he fears God and is inclined towards God, such an action can never be wasted. If a person spends the whole night in prayer, how does that benefit his neighbor? How would the neighbor know that this person spends his whole night in prayer? We have observed that from among some Hindus, there are individuals who stay awake all night; and some even abandon food and survive only on leafy vegetables, yet despite their actions, people label them *kafir* [non-believer].

Remember, faith is that which brings one closer to God. If you sit here with noble intentions and faith, even the trip to Qadian will be blessed. Once, the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] was seated in a gathering where the space was tight. Three men arrived. One searched for a place and found a spot situated near the Holy Prophet[sa]. The second one looked for a space and sat in the middle of the aisle. The third one saw the crowd, did not look for a place, and left. God Almighty informed regarding this, ‘The first man who searched for a spot and sat down will be greatly rewarded due to his action. The one who sat in the middle will also have a reward. However, I will not reward the man who left without looking for a space.’ Thus, purpose and intention are what allow a person to succeed in every deed and objective.

At this time, I would like to draw the ladies' attention towards a matter, the news of which Hazrat Adam[as] gave and all other Prophets continued to give. They have related that in the latter days there will be great distress. If a person is a Muslim in the morning, he will be a disbeliever by evening; if he goes to bed a Muslim, he will wake up a disbeliever. Hence today, Islam is in an extremely dreadful and fragile state. Each and every religion is focused on crushing Islam. Yet, I see that people care for their pet dog or cat, but today they do not even care that much for Islam. The Promised Messiah[as] states:

بیکسے شُد دین احمد ہیچ خویش و یار نیست
ہر کسے درکار خود با دین احمد کار نیست

Faith of Ahmad [Islam] has become helpless,
with no relative or friend;
Everyone is busy with his own affairs
and has nothing to do with the Faith of Ahmad

The Promised Messiah[as] related that once a pious man saw a vision of a leper in the town of Bhopal. The leper's entire body was affected by disease. When asked who he was, the man replied that he was God. The pious man was astounded. God is the ensemble of the most perfectly beautiful attributes. What kind of god is this? The leper explained that he was the god of the people of Bhopal, for this is how they perceived him. And yet, the condition of God in the world today is like that of the god of Bhopal. Whether it be Iran, Turkey, or Afghanistan, the entire world has stigmatized Islam, as if it were an injection from a medical clinic. Where at one time, the name of Islam commanded respect, now joining Islam is considered a disgrace. This is due solely to the Muslims deserting Islam.

In cities the vagrants are Muslims, beggars are Muslims, prisoners are mostly Muslim women and men, prostitutes are mostly Muslim, thugs and scoundrels in the cities are often Muslim. From among workers, the incompetent and dishonest are Muslim. Therefore, God Almighty has heaped such disgrace upon Muslims, that they are humiliated in every situation. This is solely due to the fact that Muslims have started asking, 'If Islam is true, then why are we so

humiliated?' Other nations pose the question, 'If Muslims are truthful, why are they so humiliated?' Ultimately, the whole responsibility lies upon the Muslims. Muslims deserted Islam and therefore they have been humiliated.

Amongst the affluent Muslims, there are those who believe the purpose of their lives is simply to sit idly at home, eat and manage their servants even though Islam forbids indolence. Asking others to do work is akin to begging. Once, a companion[ra] was traveling by horse when his whip fell to the ground. A man behind him wished to pick it up, but the companion said, "I swear by God, do not pick up the whip." The companion[ra] got off his horse and picked up the whip himself, so he could avoid begging.

The teachings of the Holy Prophet[sa] are not intended to create defects or idleness, but Muslim women are often idle. This is in the sense that they do not perform any useful and productive work. They believe that their sole work is housework, cooking food, making the bed, washing their children's clothes, and cleaning up their children's waste. Yet even a cat provides for herself and her children. What then distinguishes man from an animal?

You must spare some time for the benefit of others. Do your household chores, but also do something for the welfare of others. Ask yourself, what have you done in your life to benefit the world? If nothing, then do it now.

The only job affluent ladies do is to exercise authority over their servants and still they continue to complain about the amount of work they do. In England, women work quite a bit. They are clerks in offices, they work as nurses and doctors, etc. Last year, I offered women the opportunity to learn to do *tabligh* here and that we would make arrangements for them. At *dars*, men were [similarly] encouraged to come, and five hundred men attended, however among the women, we received only one letter expressing any interest.

Last year, women were urged to establish Lajna all over [India] and to teach handicraft. Yet, except for a few women, nobody paid attention. By learning handicraft skills, you should assist the poor.

Manual work is not a disgrace, but rather it is the highest honor. King Aurangzeb would do calligraphy of the Holy Qur'ān. The Holy Prophet[sa] helped the women in their household chores. Work is not a weakness nor is it a disgrace. The women here believe that the purpose of their birth is to eat and drink. God has given [us] hands, feet, tongue, eyes, and a nose. One realizes the importance of an organ when it is lost. If an eye is lost or the nose is cut, only then is their value realized.

[In our culture], having one's nose cut off is considered a great disgrace. The nose is held in great esteem although it is a small organ. The nose has many functions. One breathes through the nose and even the hair inside the nose is not useless. Simply take the example of our ears. If they were severed, how unattractive a person would look. Thus, one should ponder over why God has given us eyes, a nose, ears etc., and thousands of blessings. Is it only so that one would eat in this world and then die? What benefits can one derive from these blessings? Thus, today I advise you to make your life useful, so much so, that the people in your town are convinced that their survival is dependent upon your life, or the people in the villages believe that their existence is only through you, or that the neighbors feel that they rely solely upon your life. There is a famous Arabic proverb:

مَوْتُ الْعاَلِمِ مَوْتُ الْعَالَمِ

[The death of a scholar is the death of the world.]

Thus, make your life constructive according to your individual understanding. By observing the success of other nations, make your life useful.

If up until now, you have not changed your condition, then transform it now. Sympathize with the creation of God, consider the problems faced by others as your own, share in grief. People do not look towards how many prayers an individual offers. What good are your prayers when your existence is of no benefit to them? Therefore, make your life and your existence worthwhile.

(*Misbah*, January 15, 1929)

Respect the Law and Do not be Afraid of Differences in Opinion

Delivered by Hazrat Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad, Khalifat-ul-Masih II[ra]

At a welcoming reception hosted by Lajna Ima'illah Qadian, Hazrat Khalifat-ul-Masih II[ra] gave the following address.

The Law Should Always be Followed

First of all, on behalf of my family, my companions, and myself, I would like to thank the members of the Lajna Ima'illah for this reception upon our arrival.

After this, I now believe it is necessary to draw the Lajna's attention towards an issue concerning the expansion of their work, which is that the life of an organization is in fact the life of its rules. The purpose of taking a task from one individual and delegating it to several people is that the people become accustomed to valuing a united effort. This produces a spirit whereby the continuity of the task is not affected, even if at some point the organization loses one of its leaders. To fulfill this objective, it is vital and essential that the rules are always followed, and in order to follow the rules, it is essential that the rules should be available in precise language. Wherever Lajna members strive to expand their work, they should not go beyond their own rules. In the address that was presented just now, there was a mention of a school, but the Lajna reports which I have received have not alluded to this in the same manner. It is possible that the Lajna may have passed a resolution regarding this, but I did not receive that resolution. There is a great difference in what was mentioned and what was relayed.

Thus, Lajna members should remember that they should never start a project before setting up the rules and regulations accordingly, no matter how great or useful the project may be. I would even say that if *Jihad* [striving in the way of Allah] depended on the decisions by Lajna, even that should not begin before a plan is devised.

Do not be Afraid of Disagreement

The second issue I wish to draw the Lajna's attention to is that when a Jama'at begins to work under a system, differences in opinion will occur among the members, for they were previously unaccustomed to functioning under this system. One should not be disconcerted by such disagreements. These differences uncover shortcomings in the system, which are usually created when work is in its initial stage.

Shortcomings in laws are only discovered when challenged by lawyers and in this way, the law progresses towards improvement. Thus, if disagreement occurs in Lajna's work, do not become anxious because the differences draw attention towards deficiencies and reveal the flaws of others. As a result, the rules become more and more comprehensive and subsequently the work improves as the law progresses towards perfection. Therefore, do not fret over a difference of opinion, rather, it should be valued.

Take note. The Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] said:

اخْتِلَافُ أُمَّتِي رَحْمَةٌ

Difference among my followers is a blessing.

The form of disagreement being mentioned here is the one that takes place within an organization and an association which serves under *Khilafat*. Of course, any disagreement which is confrontational and out of line leads to destruction. When each group declares to leave aside their differences whenever they run contrary to the rules or the system and if they pledge to work according to the system in place then such disagreement does not cause harm rather, it is beneficial.

The Lajna members should remember that there is a vast scope of work before them. There are such tasks which await them, that as of now they are unable to comprehend. There was a time when I would speak to Lajna members, and I would tell them what to do. After listening to my speech, the members would say, "We have understood your speech very well, but tell us what we should do?" I would then repeat my discourse and again they would say they had listened

carefully to the entire issue, but they still awaited my instructions. I was taken aback by their response for I had told them of all sorts of projects, and still they asked me what to do! However, now I have observed that they are growing in their understanding of how to work and they have begun their activities with great enthusiasm. Yet, they should remember that disagreements are inevitable in such matters, and they should develop the habit of tolerating differences. A nation, which does not tolerate differences, excepting disagreements on those issues which are fundamental, and a nation which does not integrate people who disagree with them and instead forces them to break away, such a nation will never progress.

A major reason for the downfall of Muslims is that they sideline whoever disagrees with them. In fact, if something is not a fundamental disagreement, and does not violate the system or strike at its foundation, then it is necessary and should be accepted. Of course, if the dispute is over principles and strikes at the roots, then it is necessary to separate the person who causes such disagreements because doing so is comparable to the severing of a limb which develops an infection, which in turn will destroy the whole body.

Following this, I turn my attention towards an incident, as alluded to in this address, which occurred here at the slaughterhouse. I will speak to Lajna [about it]. Among the Lajna Ima'illah [present here], such women are not present here who have children or who have grown up children, except for a few. Yet, as the women present here are the representatives of other women, I will draw their attention towards the responsibilities enjoined upon the women of this era.

Make your Children Brave and Strong

Our Jama'at has remained peaceful in the current time, It is peaceful now and will remain peaceful in the time to come. However, this does not mean that we abandon our rights upon being forced to do so and it does not mean that we should refuse to safeguard our rights. The most peaceful person in the world was the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa], but the latter part of his life was spent in fighting battles.

In reality, peace and war are not contradictory. At times, peace and war are one and the same, and at other times, war is opposed to peace. Sometimes, war opposes peace to a certain extent and favors it to a certain extent. At other times, it is necessary to wage war to establish peace, and there are times when war is waged to destroy peace. At times, the situation lies between these two. In other words, the intention is to establish peace, but the action leads to the destruction of peace. Or the intention is to destroy peace, but the action taken leads to peace. Thus, if war is necessary to establish peace, then it is necessary for our children to be courageous and valiant.

In our country, one great problem is that when the time comes for men to undertake a special task, women make a great commotion, 'O, our children, our brothers, our husbands, and our other relatives will undergo hardships.' Where the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] had fearless and courageous men, he also had valiant and resolute women. The Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] and his followers accomplished magnificent and outstanding deeds. If a man sets out for the battlefield and leaves behind a crying mother, a wailing wife and a grief-stricken sister at home, he will be unable to carry out his task courageously because the shadow of grief will linger in his heart. It will plague him with the feeling that his home has been engulfed by sorrow. However, if he leaves his family joyful, his heart will be cheerful. He will be confident that he has not left an unhappy person in his home. Secure in this pleasure, he will wholeheartedly embark upon the journey with his life.

As our Jama'at progresses, many important tasks will unfold before them. We do not know what sacrifices we will be required to offer to advance forward. Only God knows how soon in the future we will be responsible for the administration of governments and what circumstances we will go through to do so. Therefore, it is important that the women of our Jama'at be brave and strong-hearted, so that their children grow to be courageous and bold.

Where I advise the women of my Jama'at to progress in education, moral training, the organization and service of religion, I would also add that they should raise their children to be courageous. Their hearts should be so strong that whatever sacrifice is required,

they do so with pleasure. Thus, when they leave their homes for the purpose of sacrifice, they depart gladly, not leaving grief-stricken scenes behind them.

Now that the *Adhān* for *Maghrib* has been called, I will conclude my speech and pray that God endows the men and women of the Jama‘at with such spirit, that the best possible system is established. May He also bestow spirituality, lest we are left with a system, but no spirituality.

(*Al-Fazl*, October 11, 1929)

Address to the Ladies at the Occasion of Jalsa Salana

Delivered by Hazrat Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad Khalifat-ul-Masih II[ra]

December 28, 1929

After the recitation of *Tashahhud* and *Surah Al-Fatihah,* Hazrat Khalifat-ul-Masih II[ra] stated:

The Current State of Women's Educational Abilities:

Every year, I have drawn the attention of the women of our Jama'at to the fact that until they attain an education, their own relationship with God can never be satisfactory nor can they fulfill the obligations they owe to their relatives, family, nation, and country. Perhaps the words that I have just related weigh heavy upon you, for they imply that you are uneducated. Yet the fact is that you are not only unacquainted with other languages, but you are also unfamiliar with your own language and due to this, I have difficulty in delivering speeches to women.

The Difficulties Faced During a Speech

When giving a speech, I try not to use words that you cannot understand, even though I do not deliver this speech in a foreign language. When a nation is in such a pitiful state that it does not possess the ability to understand a speech in its own language, it is proof enough of its poor condition.

A speech is delivered in everyday language. For example, if religion is being discussed, words such as Day of Judgment, destiny, etc., are essential. Now if someone [listening] does not understand these terms, several difficulties arise for the lecturer. He is left with only two options: either he uses simple words, concentrating on using easily understood language thus ruining his speech, or he uses technical words in his speech which his audience fails to understand.

Therefore, every single woman should pay attention to her educational progress. On the men's side, I can speak for hours on a single verse, but among women, my attention remains focused on whether the address can be easily understood. Due to this, the address and lecture etc., directed towards women remains very basic and the real subject escapes the mind. When I give the *dars* to women, there are times when I deliver a lesson over one and a half to two *rukū'* in a short time, whereas with men, I spend the same amount of time in explaining just one verse of the Holy Qur'ān. So once again, I call your attention to the importance of being knowledgeable in your own country's language.

Pay Attention Towards your Progress

After this, I draw your attention to the fact that religious education is the most important education. How can I explain it to you so that you pay heed? In this age, Allah Almighty's messenger came and for forty years he spoke continuously of God Almighty, resulting in a God-fearing atmosphere where many men attained the status of *Ghaus*, *Qutab, Wali, Siddiq* [various ranks denoting extreme devotion and nearness to God], and the righteous. Some of them ranked among the likes of Hazrat Abu Bakr[ra], Hazrat 'Uthman[ra], Hazrat Zubair[ra], and Hazrat Talha[ra]. He also addressed many among you and he also narrated God's teachings and he trained the women in a similar manner. However, they [the women] were unable to reach such a [lofty] status.

After his demise, God appointed a person with the *Siddiqi*[5] attributes from among you, but even that did not bring about the required transformation. God then appointed me to this position and for the last fifteen years, I have been drawing your attention towards religion through regular lessons and recurring sermons, exhortations, and lectures. I have always striven to make women progress, yet still

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[5] The person with ***Siddiqi*** attributes refers to Hazrat Hakeem Maulana Nur-ud-Din, Khalifat-ul-Masih 1[ra]. Siddiqi means the Truthful and is the high rank of extreme devotion that Hazrat Maulana Nur-ud-Din attained, similar to Hazrat Abu Bakr[ra] *Siddiq*. [Editor]

that spirit that I yearn for has not been cultivated within them. I do not see any woman among you who is capable of leading and guiding you. Alas! What effort should I employ so you may awaken? There is a fire raging in the world, yet there you lie in a deep stupor.

Does Anyone among you Know the Holy Qur'ān?

A few days ago, I posed a question to the women here; can you name any woman [from amongst you] who has studied the Holy Qur'ān thoughtfully and has herself uncovered a profound meaning or aspect from within it? Excluding scholars, there are many men who are apparently uneducated or minimally educated, yet whether they live in a town or in rural areas despite their apparent lack of knowledge, they can explain many profound facets of the Holy Qur'ān which people were unaware of before. Men from Qadian, many who are unfamiliar with Arabic, can relate several wonderfully astute and meaningful points from the Holy Qur'ān. Give me one example of a woman who has uncovered something new from the Holy Qur'ān and presented the world with something it was previously unaware of. Additionally, there are even some women present among you, who others call *maulvis*. Once again, I emphasize [this point] and ask you: who among you has been blessed with the understanding of the Holy Qur'ān?

What is the Reason for this Shortcoming?

There are many women among you who say men are more favored. Yet, I ask you, does God Almighty harbor hostility towards you? Does He refuse to help you? Is the door to understanding the word of God shut upon you and do the angels not help you access the court of God? What is the reason for this?

The only reason is that you do not read the Holy Qur'ān as the Holy Qur'ān should be read and you do not realize that it contains knowledge, value, and wisdom. You read it only as a divine Book which you are required to read. For this reason, the door to its wisdom is closed to you. Heed the following point well. The Holy Qur'ān is God's book, and it holds all knowledge. The Holy Qur'ān does not exist so that you may gain Heaven by reading it or Hell by not reading it; rather Allah says:

فِيْهِ ذِكْرُكُمْ

["…*wherein lies your glory and eminence*;"]
(Holy Qur'ān, Ch. 21: V. 11)

That is, it contains provisions for your spiritual development and knowledge. The Holy Qur'ān is not a charm. It contains wisdom and principles. Until you comprehend it, the Holy Qur'ān will be of no benefit to you. There must be hundreds among you who have stated some facts of information. However, if you are asked about the source of your knowledge, you would never mention the Holy Qur'ān to be the source of that information. Instead, the source of your information would be books, magazines, novels or the publication of an author. In many cases, for the women of our Jama'at the source would be a book of the Promised Messiah[as]. Not even one amongst you would say that you had understood a certain point after pondering over the Holy Qur'ān. How dark the situation is that you remain so ignorant of the Holy Qur'ān which contains such treasures equally for all mankind in this world. If the door to the Holy Qur'ān is closed to you, what more can be expected of you?

How One Woman Progressed

I will tell you the story of a woman who was little versed in writing and reading. At present, I am not sure if she knew how to write, but it is certain that she was able to read. She recited the Holy Qur'ān as the Holy Qur'ān should be recited, not for the expectation of Heaven or for the fear of Hell; she did not read it as a habit or to show off. Rather, she recited it with the understanding that this was God's Word and with the awareness that it contained all knowledge. As a result, although she was never apprenticed to anyone, she became a teacher for the whole world. Who was that woman? Her name was Hazrat A'ishah[ra].

That Lady Surpassed Many Men in her Comprehension of the Holy Qur'ān

She [Hazrat A'ishah[ra]] understood the Holy Qur'ān the way it should be understood. Her one single example shamed the men of the

world. Despite all their intellect and intelligence, they were unable to attain such astuteness and wisdom [as her]. There is a verse [in the Holy Qur'ān]:

مَا كَانَ مُحَمَّدٌ اَبَآ اَحَدٍ مِّنْ رِّجَالِكُمْ وَ لٰكِنْ رَّسُوْلَ اللّٰهِ وَ خَاتَمَ النَّبِيّٖنَ ؕ

[*"Muhammad is not the father of any of your men, but he is the Messenger of Allah, and the seal of the Prophets."*]

(Holy Qur'ān, Ch. 33: V. 41)

Muhammad[sa] is not the father of any man amongst you. Surely, he is Allah's Messenger and the seal of the prophets. The people understood [this to mean] that there would be no prophets after him. This is because the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] had also said:

لَانَبِیَّ بَعْدِیْ

[There is no Prophet after me]

(By this the Holy Prophet[sa] meant that there will come no prophet who will invalidate his *Shariah)*. This saying gave additional support to people of that particular viewpoint and so they deduced that there could never be a prophet after the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa]. Muslims spread throughout the world and they propagated this idea. Once, this topic was being discussed in a gathering and Hazrat A'ishah[ra] passed by. On hearing this, she said:

قُوْلُوْا اِنَّهٗ خَاتَمُ الْاَنْبِيَاءِ وَلَا تَقُوْلُوْا لَا نَبِيَّ بَعْدَهٗ

[Certainly, do say, he (the Holy Prophet) is the Seal of all Prophets, but do not say, there is no Prophet after him.]

Behold, by reflecting upon the Holy Qur'ān, Hazrat A'ishah[ra] came to the correct conclusion, granting even the Prophet of this age a great advantage. How neatly did she remove the misconceptions which have misled Muslims for thirteen hundred years! Thus, the Promised Messiah[as] also benefited from Hazrat A'ishah's contemplation of the Holy Qur'ān, and the Ahmadiyya Jama'at is indebted to her. She eased

their predicament. This is just one example of her understanding of the Holy Qur'ān.

An Example of this Lady's Insight into Hadith

The second incident, which is evidence of her profound wisdom and insight, is the martyrdom of Hazrat 'Ali's[ra] brother, Hazrat Ja'ffer[ra]. When news of this reached home, the women began to wail and lament, as was the Arab custom. Since Islam was new, people had not yet entirely cultivated Islamic habits. The customs from the time of ignorance still persisted and were being followed by these women. When this was reported to the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa], he instructed that they be told to stop. Despite being forbidden, they did not cease, and someone again complained to the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa]. The Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] stated:

احثوالتراب في وُجوُهِهِنَّ
[Cast dust in their faces]

That is, to fling dust at their faces. The people who heard him say this ran to literally throw dust upon them. When Hazrat A'ishah[ra] heard of this incident, she was quite displeased with them and asked, "Do you believe that the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] would be so ill-mannered as to direct you to afflict pain at this time of hardship? The Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] meant for you to leave them alone."

This Lady had True Understanding of the Word of Allah and the Word of the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa]

You see, Hazrat A'ishah[ra] was able to grasp such a point, which men were unable to understand. She is the only woman in the world who fully comprehended the Holy Qur'ān and the word of Allah's Prophet[sa]. Confirmation of this fact is provided by the incident of *Ifk* [the great lie], when the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] asked her, "A'ishah[ra], tell me truthfully what happened?" She replied, "That is not my job. God Himself will provide the answer." Subsequently, revelation from the Holy Qur'ān proved her view to be correct, for the Holy Qur'ān proclaims that the accuser is responsible for bringing witnesses, not that the accused be compelled to swear to his or her

innocence.

Hazrat A'ishah[ra] studied the Holy Qur'ān as it should be studied, therefore, she acquired an understanding of it which was superior to that of men. If you also strive to contemplate and comprehend it in the same way, you will derive the same benefits and you need not depend on anyone to acquire any type of knowledge. The Holy Qur'ān contains knowledge for every age. If one reflects upon it with God's help, one can unlock the doors to astounding knowledge for people around the world.

The Holy Qur'ān is a Treasure of Knowledge

Take the Holy Qur'ān as a simple example. Thirteen hundred years ago, it described the time of the Promised Messiah[as]. It says:

وَ اِذَا الۡعِشَارُ عُطِّلَتۡ ۞

"And when the she-camels, ten months pregnant, are abandoned,"

(Holy Qur'ān, Ch. 81: V. 5)

Which means that travel by camels would be rendered obsolete. Today, the world has invented trains, which proves what the Holy Qur'ān revealed many years ago that a time will come when these conveyances will no longer be required due to the invention of a new means of transportation.

وَ اِذَا الۡوُحُوۡشُ حُشِرَتۡ ۞

"And when the wild beasts are gathered together,"

(Holy Qur'ān, Ch. 81: V. 6)

Which means that inferior and ignorant nations will gain respect and a time will come when they awaken to demand their rights and the world will be required to give them their rights. Merely reflect on the issue of elections and you will see how perfectly this prophecy is affirmed. Highly respected *Brahmans* [the highest caste in Hinduism] knock on the doors of *Chooray* [lower-class street sweepers] to ask for their votes.

وَ اِذَا النُّفُوۡسُ زُوِّجَتۡ ۞

"And when people are brought together,"

(Holy Qur'ān, Ch. 81: V. 8)

Or in other words, people will be united together; meaning the lower classes and upper classes will all gather in one place. One example of this is today's gathering.

There are several amongst you whose mothers and grandmothers might have considered it an insult to sit with people of a lower class, but you are sitting together in accordance with God's revelation and God has made everyone equal.

Times have Changed, therefore you should also Reform Yourself

Today, all supremacy has ended. The circumstances of the past can be captured from the following example. It is said that a Chaudhry [upper class person] was traveling with a *Marasi* [street singer, considered to be of lower caste]. On their way, they stopped at an inn. The ground under the *Marasi's* bed was extremely muddy due to rain, so the poor man reluctantly moved closer to the Chaudhry. The Chaudhry smacked him harshly, exclaiming, "Are you trying to be my equal?" At the second stop, there was no bed available, therefore the Chaudhry was forced to sit on the floor. The *Marasi* took up a shovel and began to dig a grave-like hole in the ground. The Chaudhry inquired as to what he was doing, to which the *Marasi* replied "How can I possibly sit at the same level [as you]?"

Times have changed, and many Sayyeds, Pathans, and Mughals [Southeast Asian ethnicities who were considered of high social status] go to the homes of lower caste deputies and pay their respects. Now, the one who is greater and more honorable is the one who is faithful and righteous in the sight of God. Remember this, that now you can no longer sit at home and rule over others. The days of ruling over others is gone. God Almighty wishes to create unity by removing all hierarchy. According to the judgment contained within the Holy Qur'ān, the righteous will now prosper. According to the following verse, a righteous man is a learned man.

إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَتْقَاكُمْ ۚ

"Verily, the most honorable among you, in the sight of Allah, is he

who is the most righteous among you."

(Holy Qur'ān, Ch. 49: V. 14)

The Holy Qur'ān can Turn Illiterate People into the Most Learned Ones

Although we regard him to be a great scholar in the matter of faith, by worldly standards, the Promised Messiah[as] did not have much [opportunity] in the way of seeking secular knowledge. He wrote his books in the most miraculous way, although by all appearances, he was not a learned person. For this reason, the *maulvis* whom he addressed would taunt him by calling him a *clerk*, but God Almighty unlocked the doors of knowledge for him.

Look at my own situation. As a student, I failed my exams and was unable to pass a single grade. Consequently, people complained to the Promised Messiah[as] that I was not paying attention to my studies. The Promised Messiah[as] called me and Hazrat Maulana Nur-ud-Din[ra]. I was worried as to how I would be punished, but the Promised Messiah[as] wrote out a passage and asked me to copy it. When I copied it accurately, he showed it to Hazrat Maulvi Sahib[ra] and said, "The complaint seems to be incorrect." That was my test and afterwards, Hazrat Khalifat-ul-Masih I[ra] taught me. His approach to teaching was that he would read one passage of the Holy Qur'ān at a time. In response to my questions, he would say, "*Mian,* learn it for yourself."

The Incomparable Commentary of the Holy Qur'ān - A Challenge to Present Day Scholars

Academically speaking, there is no way that I can be termed a scholar. However, I have studied the Holy Qur'ān as the Holy Qur'ān should be studied and thus have benefited from it. I am now able to challenge all rival scholars to compete with me over the commentary of any verse from the Book of God. With Divine help, I will *In Sha' Allah* offer such an understanding of it, that the world will stand amazed. Whatever the topic may be and without thinking over it beforehand, I can stand up and have God Almighty open the doors of its knowledge to me. God Almighty has revealed to me such insights to the Holy Qur'ān, which have not been given to anyone within the

last thirteen hundred years, except for the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] and the Promised Messiah[as]. Thus, all knowledge develops from sincerity and righteousness and not from pretentiousness. Experience this for yourself. Read the Holy Qur'ān with sincerity and God Himself will endow you with its knowledge.

At times, experts in various fields have come to me and asked me questions concerning their subjects. When I answer their questions correctly, they are amazed and ask me the names of the books I have read on the subject. At my response that I have read none, they reply that my answers indicate as if I have read many books on the topic. I answer that I have read the most comprehensive book of knowledge. Ponder upon each word and statement of the Holy Qur'ān and the door to its knowledge will be opened for you. Even a woman of average ability can derive benefit from it. I have instructed you year after year, but you have not derived any benefit. May God enable me to see you obtain some benefit from this instruction this time.

How the Holy Qur'ān Should be Read

The Holy Qur'ān is the first and foremost source needed to attain religious knowledge. It should be read with the intention that it is the Book of Allah, and it contains absolute knowledge. Question each word, and God Himself will provide you with the answer. Look closely.

Simply saying *Al-Hamdu Lillah* reveals no insight. However, if you raise the question upon this statement of the Holy Qur'an and ask, "Why are our parents and our teachers not deserving of praise [instead of God]?" [You will notice] that the answer to this question already exists in [the subsequent statement of the Holy Qur'an which states,] *Rabbul 'Alamin* [Allah is the Lord of all the worlds]. Which means, He is also the Lord of even those who are benevolent towards you. Immediately, one understands why all praise is solely for God. This way the meanings will unfold before you. However, if your purpose is to receive blessings merely by reciting the words of the Holy Qur'ān, then there will be no benefit.

After the Holy Qur'ān, Seek Knowledge of the Sunnah of the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa]

The second essential reading to carry out for attaining religious knowledge is the knowledge of the *Sunnah* of the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa], which means reading the *Hadith* of the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa]. Religious education is incomplete without it. Although the Holy Qur'ān contains all [knowledge], absolute righteousness is required to attain its true knowledge. Those points which are dependent upon a person adopting perfect righteousness, have been concealed by the Holy Qur'ān and will only be revealed to the reader when that status [of righteousness] is achieved. Not everyone can attain supreme righteousness; therefore, the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] made the important issues and basic knowledge of *Shariah* known to everyone. For example, it includes such issues as Salāt, fasting, Hajj, Zakat, etc. Since faith requires practice and practice requires knowledge of these issues, you must become knowledgeable in *Sunnah* and *Hadith*. After becoming familiar with the Holy Qur'ān and *Hadith,* it is crucial for women to teach others. They should organize the teaching of this within their homes, towns, and neighborhoods.

Read the Books of the Promised Messiah[as]

The third important means for gaining religious knowledge is the study of the Promised Messiah's[as] books. God has shown mercy to you by making the Prophet of this age write his books in Urdu. You can easily read them and gain benefit therefore you have no excuse. The necessary knowledge regarding this era as provided by the Holy Qur'ān, can be found in his books. If you make an effort to read or listen to them, you can develop the skills which will enable you to solve the most intricate of problems.

I Will Test you on the Promised Messiah's[as] Books

At this time, I am assigning two of the Promised Messiah's[as] books, which must be read or heard by every woman. Next year, I will give you a test to assess whether you have followed my directions. I am tired of repeatedly admonishing you and yet you remain

indifferent. Now, I would like you to take a step towards practical implementation. The assigned books are *Kashti-e-Nuh* and *Shahadat-ul-Qur'ān*. Make an effort to read them. Those who are unable to read, ask your Association's secretary to arrange for you to listen to them. I will phrase the questions in such a way that even illiterate women will be able to answer them. For example, I will ask whether a particular point is mentioned in a certain book. Each one of you will either stand up or sit down, and I will say to you, "Whoever believes that this book contains issues related to this question, they should stand up." This way, I will discover whether you have read the book because whoever stands up when a point has not been mentioned in the book, will reveal that she has not read the book.

There is a story of an individual, who became a self-proclaimed *Hajji* [the name used for those who have performed the *Hajj,* pilgrimage] and would use hearsay to narrate tales of *Hajj*. *Hajr-e-Aswad* is a stone which [pilgrims] have been commanded to touch, kiss, or point towards while performing the circuit of the Ka'bah. This *Hajji* was unaware of this. A wise man came there and as a test, inquired after the well-being of a few inhabitants of Mecca. In the course of asking these questions, he inquired, "How is Mr. *Hajr-e-Aswad* doing?" The *Hajji* responded, "He is doing well, but now has grown old." Thus, his lie was exposed.

In the same way, I will be able to discover if you have read those books or not. For example, is there or is there not a mention of Jesus[as] in *Kishti-e-Nuh*? Or is Salāt mentioned in *Shahadat-ul-Qur'ān* or is it not? Even the least educated of women can do this. You should read these books thoroughly, so that you are not embarrassed at that time. Women from our Jama'at should be ahead of other women in the field of religious knowledge. In the days of the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa], there was not one single man or woman who was illiterate. This is evidence of their great sincerity, for attaining an education was not customary in Arab society. Today, we should take advantage of all available facilities for education.

Read General Newspapers as Well

The most convenient source of knowledge is a book or a

current newspaper. Although weekly magazines and other newspapers are useful, they cannot provide information that a daily newspaper can. I receive five daily newspapers and fifteen to sixteen magazines. However, I have observed that very little attention is paid to the daily newspapers in my home. Women tend to read the magazines, even though the newspapers contain more information. One's knowledge advances by reading the news, not by reading articles. Reading opinion columns is a folly. News is more valuable. I have never read the opinion of journalists because I formulate my own opinions. We should all devise our own opinions. Pay particular attention to the news and do not trust another's opinion, for opinions vary. One revelation of the Promised Messiah[as] can render one person a disbeliever and another person a believer, or in other words someone may opine that it is a lie, while another person says it is true and so the truth is revealed to him. Hence, both will have their respective points of view.

The one who reads another's opinion will be impressed by the opinion and not the real facts. As an example, I will refer to a news article published in a Lahori Jama'at's newspaper *Paigham-us-Sulah.* During the early days of my *Khilafat*, there were articles published in it with headlines such as 'The truth has been exposed,' 'The secret has been revealed,' and 'Mahmud's conspiracy has been disclosed.' Yet, the news articulated within these articles was that I wandered around at night, asking people to get up to offer Salāt and pray that the Jama'at is saved from turmoil. Upon reading this, many friends wrote and asked whether it was true. I replied, "Why do you worry? Is praying a sin? I did not ask anyone to steal or to engage in looting." Therefore, one should never be afraid of newspaper headlines.

It is Crucial to Read Al-Fazl and Misbah [Jama'at Publications]

With reference to [periodicals] of the Jama'at it is essential to read our newspapers, such as *Al-Fazl* and *Misbah*. Knowledge of the *Nizam-e-Jama'at* [administrative set-up of Ahmadiyya Jama'at] will be gained from them. Some people do not read them because they believe that the articles are too long, complex, and are beyond their comprehension. Others feel that the articles are too simple, ordinary, and that reading them would be useless. Both of these viewpoints are

wrong.

It has been narrated that once someone asked Hazrat *Imam* Abu Hanifah[rh] whether he ever had a brilliant teacher. He replied, "I never met anyone more brilliant than one child. That child gave me such advice that I still get chills thinking about it. Upon seeing the child running around in the mud and rain, I cautioned him about slipping. He replied, 'Do not worry about my slipping, as it would only soil my clothes, but take care that you do not slip. For if you slip, the whole *Ummah* will slip.'"

Therefore, do not be arrogant and do not underestimate magazines and newspapers whilst believing yourself to be more knowledgeable. In order to cultivate unity among the nation and to unify its opinions, it is imperative to read the same types of magazines.

A Suggestion for Improving Misbah

It is often said that *Misbah* contains no scholarly articles. However, when I read it, I find it to be very useful. Yes, the subject matter needs to be organized; their lack of order is a common fault in newspapers. For example, if an article discussing Allah Almighty as *Razzaq* [Provider], is laid out next to an article on embroidery, such articles will not be organized in an intellectual manner. Therefore, articles need to be better organized in our newspapers. If you promise to read it regularly, I promise to organize it. It will start with the creation of the universe, systematically followed by a series of useful and helpful articles. We will make these subjects so easy [to understand] that you will face no embarrassment at any gathering. If a discussion about Vedanta and Zoroastrianism sects takes place somewhere, you will not be perplexed by these words, for you will find a reference to all sciences in it [the *Misbah*].

Ahmadi Ladies Should Make Arrangements for Regular Reading of Misbah

Lajna members should go back to their local Majalis and pass a resolution that they will read or listen to the *Misbah* regularly and will publish it. Once two hundred Lajna members pass this resolution, I

will arrange for a series of these articles. The year before last, at this Jalsa, I told you that if fifteen women came here from other towns, I would teach them all of the Jama'at's important issues within fifteen days. However, except for one woman, no one responded. If this situation continues, then it will be your own fate.

My third piece of advice is that by the Grace of God, the establishment of the Lajna is proceeding successfully. Right now, three Lajna chapters are working extremely well, i.e., Qadian, Sialkot, and Amritsar. The Lahore and Peshawar chapters are right behind them. I hope that other Lajna chapters will also strive to do useful work. The Qadian Lajna's activities are limited to the headquarters at present. I hope that in the future, they will also attempt to manage arrangements outside [of Qadian].

Women Should Assume their Responsibilities

Women should assume responsibility for their own affairs. Only then can they progress. We do not know what is on your minds. We can only be made aware of women's needs through women. Just as we understand men's needs, which women cannot know, in the same way we are unaware of that which is on your mind. Therefore, you should express your opinions yourselves and explain that which lies within your hearts.

The Promised Messiah[as] has stated that faith is of three types. One is that of an old woman, who says *Subhanallah* [Holy is Allah] upon seeing a mountain; she says *Subhanallah* when she hears about a saint; and says *Subhanallah* while happily believing that this saint subdued ravenous beasts. She is set in her view that these are the ways of Allah.

Hazrat Khalifat-ul-Masih I[ra] would tell of a popular fable among the public, of a time when the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] embarked on a *Mi'raj* [The apex of spirituality/ the event mentioned in Surah An-Najm/ a spiritual journey] and his path was obstructed by a mountain. Voices upon voices called out from the heavens, urging him to hurry. He ran here and there but was unable to find his way. Finally, he came upon two beggars who were grinding opium and upon asking

them for directions, they told him, "Wait, let us drink our opium." Hazrat *Jibra'il*[ra] [the angel Gabriel] and the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] were in a hurry, yet the beggars took their time and continued to drink *bhang* [an opium derivative]. Finally, they squeezed the opium leaves and made a ball out of its residue. They threw it towards the mountain, exclaiming, "Ya 'Ali[ra]." The mountain exploded and a path was created for them.

Upon hearing such absurd stories, some women still say, *Subhanallah*. Ignorant and foolish people believe that such tales are true. They do not realize that such tales defame God, the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] and Hazrat 'Ali[ra] as well. Hazrat 'Ali[ra] acquired his status due to the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa]. When he is dishonored, then how can Hazrat Ali's[ra] honor be maintained? Just look at our nation. No one captured us and taught us Islam; rather, our forefathers conquered Islamic countries and accepted Islam after being impressed by its good qualities. Why do we respect Hazrat 'Ali[ra] today? It is purely due to the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa]. If we had not believed in the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa], we would have respected Hazrat 'Ali[ra] merely as one among many chiefs. In short, one's faith should not be so ignorant. This type of faith is like that of an infant, who is always under another's control.

He [Promised Messiah[as]] says the second type of faith is that of the philosophers, who are skeptical of every concept. It is like the faith of older boys, who run and fall.

The third type of faith is the faith of saints, which is the faith of the mature and wise. They are not controlled by others, and they are not hampered in their actions. When they act, they do not fall or become injured, rather they act while staying safe from injury. So, remember that women can advise other women much better, which is why the existence of Lajna is so vital. They will understand other women's needs and their advice will accordingly leave a deeper impact upon them.

Duties of Lajna

The following should be the duties of Lajna:

1. They should make sure whether or not all Ahmadi women in their chapter know the *Kalima* [*Shahada*] and Salāt. They should administer a test annually and submit a report. There should be no negligence in this regard.

2. Participate in *tabligh.* Arrange meetings everywhere and invite women. Lajna should pay prompt and immediate attention to this matter. When we preach to non-Ahmadi women and they convert, then they will also persuade their men to accept Ahmadiyyat.

3. Organize the system of *chanda*. The purpose of *chanda* is not to fulfill our needs, for God's work never comes to a halt. The purpose of *chanda* is to strengthen faith. Ponder over how there are many treasures that lie buried away in the earth. If God desired, then just as He has informed his pious servants of thousands of matters concerning the Unseen in the past, He could reveal the location of any buried treasure so that it be used to advance religious work. God has given me much knowledge of the Unseen. He could have told me that also. Yet, He desires to strengthen your faith and to create a spirit of life in you. Once the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] asked a person to pay Zakat, but the man made some excuse. The Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] instructed that in the future, Zakat would not be accepted from him. Later, [to make up for it], he would present countless camels and goats, but they would not be accepted, and he would leave crying. There is no stipulation of quantity when giving *chanda*, only that the intention be sincere.

Strive to advance in your faith and wherever a Lajna is not established, create one and claim your rights for yourself. When one stands up for one's rights, God Himself procures their rights. Wake from your slumber and serve your faith, so that the blessings of God are bestowed upon you, as they are on men. May you become the masters of those bounties of God, which were granted to your ancestors.

(*Misbah*, January 15, 1930)

Women's Right to Representation at *Majlis-e-Mushawarat*

Address at Jalsa Salana
Delivered by Hazrat Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad,
Khalifat-ul-Masih II[ra]

December 28, 1929

While giving his speech on various important matters at the Jalsa Salana held on December 28th 1929, Hazrat Khalifat-ul-Masih II[ra] said the following regarding women's rights to representation at the *Majlis-e-Mushawarat* [an assembly of Jama'at representatives for mutual consultation]:

One more issue, which has created an outcry in our Jama'at, is the matter of women's rights at the *Majlis-e-Mushawarat*. During the *Majlis-e-Mushawarat,* I had presented a question of whether women should be given the right to representation. No other matter has generated so much passion, or rather frenzy, as this issue has produced. Women may be fragile, but it seems that they have a special ability to embolden men. Some friends feel so strongly regarding this, that they say if women receive the right of representation, it will be the demise of Islam. By contrast, the same fervor was not observed in the opposing group, although women do feel strongly. When an article was published in *Al-Fazl* opposing women's rights to representation, the Lajna submitted a complaint to me asking what should be done now. *Jami'a Ahmadiyya* held a debate and those who opposed women's right to representation, were declared victorious. I told the women, "You should hold a meeting as well and debate over whether or not men have the right to representation in *Majlis-e-Mushawarat*, and then decide that they do not."

In *Jami'a Ahmadiyya*, the decision was made on children's subjects, not on the right to representation. Although this is not a trivial question, a mistake could be very dangerous. Yet on the other hand it is not so extreme that if women were given the right to representation, Islam would be declared dead. There is no doubt that

this question is very important, but it does not pertain to *Shariah*. *Shariah* proves that the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] sought advice from men as well as women. The methodology of consultation is not specified, either with reference to men or to women. Even the greatest advocate against the representation of women cannot prove this issue. The *Shariah* states, "seek consultation." However, the method is left to our discretion to act according to the prevailing circumstances. If during the time of the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa], consultation consisted of representatives coming to Medina from Syria, Yemen, Aleppo, and so forth, it is possible that an attack could have taken place in their absence. Therefore, the Holy Prophet Muhammad's[sa] practice was to gather people at the time of Salāt to consult them. Later, this practice had to be changed. Therefore, the method of consultation can be altered, for it is not specified in the *Shariah*. We must establish it according to our circumstances. If we err, we will suffer the consequences. The *Shariah* will not be buried away. It will surely remain alive.

The people in our Jama'at should fully understand this. That age no longer exists when a person can stand up and declare that women are intellectually challenged, thereby inferring that women have no intelligence. This assessment is itself proven wrong by the practice of the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] and the practice of those who followed him. If it meant what is normally thought to be true, then why did the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] seek advice from 'Umme Salmah[ra]? If women are deficient in intellect, then could such women exist who excelled perfectly intelligent men in matters of intellect, leaving no man to be their equal? I present to you Hazrat A'ishah[ra]. In the Holy Qur'ān, the following words were revealed:

خَاتَمَ النَّبِيّٖنَ

["*Seal of the Prophets"*]

(Holy Qur'ān, Ch. 33: V. 41)

On the other hand, there were also the words [of the Holy Prophet[sa]] mentioned in the *Hadith* which states:

لَا نَبِيَّ بَعْدِيْ

[There is no Prophet after me]

As we moved further and further away from the time of the Holy Prophet[sa], it was concluded from these [phrases] that no other prophet would come after him. No man was able to avert this danger, except for Hazrat 'Ali[ra] and one other. However, Hazrat A'ishah[ra] very boldly declared:

قُوْلُوْا اِنَّهٗ خَاتَمُ الْاَنْبِيَاءِ وَلَا تَقُوْلُوْا لَا نَبِيَّ بَعْدَهٗ

[Certainly, do say, he (the Holy Prophet[sa]) is the Seal of all Prophets, but do not say, there is no Prophet after him.]

"Say, that the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] is خَاتَمَ النَّبِيّٖنَ *Khātamun-Nabiyyīn,* [Seal of the Prophets] but do not say that no Prophet will appear after him."

Now observe whose opinion has been given validation by this era's Apostle [the Promised Messiah[as]]. The women who were considered intellectually deficient, or those men who were considered intellectually perfect. At that time, if she had thought, 'Why should I say anything, when I am considered among the intellectually inferior?' we would have encountered many difficulties on this issue and would have faced defeat at many fronts. When we present the meaning of *Khātamun-Nabiyyīn* to be that a prophet can come after the Holy Prophet[sa] but he must be from the followers of the Holy Prophet[sa] and that he must be subordinate to the Holy Prophet[as], we were bound to have been asked that why was this meaning not realized by the people that had gone before? Now, when someone poses this question, we can respond that the Holy Prophet Muhammad's[sa] wife interpreted it as such.

In fact, 'intellectually deficient' is a relative term. It implies that a woman is less intelligent than a man. It means that the most perfect woman will be less intelligent than the most perfect man and a

secondary level woman will be less intelligent than a secondary level man. This is something that cannot be denied because in some matters which relate to men, women are compelled to remain behind, such as in battles or wars.

Thus, 'intellectually deficient' is a relative term and one cannot take away a woman's right to representation due to this, for if we follow a method of selection, then only men with higher intellectual abilities should have the right to representation and others should be denied this right. However, the reality is that there are very knowledgeable men who attend *Majlis-e-Mushawarat*, along with others who know nothing. There are scores of better men elsewhere and not only men, but scores of better women. For instance, compared to the villager who is a representative at the *Majlis-e-Mushawarat*, there are many more knowledgeable men from our Lahore Jama'at who are not given the right of representation.

Therefore, women do have the right to representation, but the question is how to give them this right. Upon reading some articles in *Al-Fazl,* some people may come under the impression that the time for *Jihad* has come! However, they must remember that women possess this right. The question is how we should consult them, without detracting from their rights, and also so that we benefit from their advice.

(*Al-Fazl,* January 7, 1930; Number 53, Volume: 17)

Marriage Customs and their Reformation

Delivered by Hazrat Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad, Khalifat-ul-Masih II[ra]

Hazrat Sayyed Muhammad Ishaaq[ra] read a statement outlining marriage customs at the wedding of his daughter, Sayyeda Naseera Begum. Hazrat Khalifat-ul-Masih II[ra] addressed this statement. This speech gives guidance on principles regarding these customs.

True Islamic Teachings Concerning Marriage

There are four points concerning the *Nikah*. Two of these are part of Islam. The first is that the *Nikah* must be performed with the girl's consent and secondly, that the *Nikah* is publicly announced. Yet, the other two are not part of Islam. The first is that the groom's family goes to the bride's house and brings back the girl. This can be practiced both ways. The groom's side can bring back the bride or the bride's family themselves, may take the bride to the groom's home. In fact, it is my observation that there are many examples of when the bride's family escorted the bride to the groom's home. Therefore, introducing a new requirement into Islam, where the groom's family must go and bring back the bride, is not appropriate and will introduce problems. There is no doubt that to show the bride respect, oftentimes the groom's family does go to bring her. However, if the bride's family arrives with the bride, there is nothing improper about this. The second point is the giving of the *Jahez* [dowry given by the girl's family]. According to Islamic *Shariah,* it is the man who must give something to the woman. The woman is not required to bring anything with her, and anyone who forces her to do so, has committed a grave error. Certainly, there is no harm if her parents wish to give her something, but it is not compulsory. Rather, it is unlawful for the groom to refrain from giving something. *Shariah* has made it mandatory for every man to set the *Mehr* for women.

There are certain other points in Mir Sahib's address which remain unclear to me. For instance, if relatives are to participate, they

must pay special attention to their clothes, thus requiring them to make new clothes. However, new clothes are not necessary to attend. I am present here but have not made any new clothes. The clothes I am wearing are those which I already owned. Thus, an attempt to hinder participation based solely upon the requirement that new clothes be made will result in people within the Jama'at viewing such participation as improper. Gradually, a feeling will arise within the Jama'at, that there is a lack of cooperation on such occasions. That women and men would all stay at home, is also incorrect. It is necessary to abolish the notion that new clothes are required to participate in such functions, regardless of whether one can afford it, as opposed to completely opting out of participating.

Reforming the Customs of Jahez and Bari

There is no doubt that the customs of the *Jahez* [dowry given by the girl's family] and *Bari* [a gift given by the groom's family] are not good [as it is currently practiced], therefore an effort should be made to reform these customs as soon as possible. In this matter, I fully support Mir Sahib's view. A plague and hardship which destroys homes such as this, should be wiped out immediately. I have seen very good households deeply involved in this custom, and I am not embarrassed to reveal that in our own household, the women are wholly involved in this. I have heard them say they should do something, no matter how minimal. Usually, people do not consider their financial condition. There is no doubt that not only *Jahez*, but *Bari* is a bad custom. Giving *Jahez* according to one's means is somewhat justifiable; however, to date, I have found no precedence for the giving of *Bari,* especially in the way it is now practiced. However, this does not mean that those who can afford to give a *Jahez,* should not do so. On such occasions, the Promised Messiah's[as] conduct should be an example for us. The Holy Qur'ān is the foremost [authority], and on those issues where it is silent, it is permissible to check the *Hadith*. Yet, the narrators of the *Hadith* are not present among us, and we personally have no knowledge of their morals and truthfulness. It is possible that among them, were those who fabricated [the *Hadith*]. It is also possible that there are so-called *Hadith*, which hold no more value than a piece of rubbish; and there are *Hadith,* which deserve to be discarded as rubbish, but are

perceived to be authentic. Indeed, there are many *Hadith* concerning the Promised Messiah[as] which have been proven to be fabricated, along with many which should be regarded as authentic, but are considered false. However, the revelation of the apostle, appointed by God Almighty, is recent and fresh; and whatever he says, is like that of freshly squeezed juice. Thus, his deeds are [representative of] the real *Sunnah* and Islamic teaching since he has been appointed by Allah Almighty. The likeness of *Hadith* is like that of a person coming and telling us that the Qur'an says one thing or the other whilst we have not seen it for ourselves. Therefore, we must give precedence to what we hear directly from the Messenger of God.

The Reception Given by the Bride's Family

I consider the reception given by the bride's family to be a burdensome custom. However, if the girl's family were to feed the guests something without a formal reception, this would be no *Bid'at* [innovation]. Yes, if it is alleged that the person who does not feed [his guests] is wrong for doing so, then it unquestionably becomes *Bid'at*. And likewise, if anyone says that refraining from giving *Jahez* is wrong and *Jahez* must be given, then that person spreads *Bid'at*. However, if the individual, out of his own desire, gives his daughter something or feeds his guests, then this can in no way be described as *Bid'at*. On the occasion of Mubarika Begum's wedding, the Promised Messiah[as] himself ordered and paid for items from Amritsar for the attending guests. If a person does this because he feels it is required of him, then he is practicing *Bid'at.* However, when a person naturally and considerately serves his guests something, it cannot be called *Bid'at.* Mir Sahib states in his address that middle-class people should give the bride some clothes, books, a chest etc., as she departs, but if giving anything to the girl is *Bid'at*, then even this instruction promotes *Bid'at*. Why should we do this? Basically, if one gives according to his own means, then it is a good practice; however, the person who cannot afford to give even these few things and puts himself into debt to do so, he will be held accountable by *Shariah*, for practicing extravagance. God Almighty forbids extravagance and waste in the Holy Qur'ān. It is commanded:

وَ لَا تُبَذِّرْ تَبْذِيْرًا ۝

"Squander not thy wealth extravagantly."
(Holy Qur'ān, Ch. 17: V. 27)

And those who act extravagantly are called the brethren of Satan. Yet, if one happily gives according to his means, there is no harm in that. If today, a person can afford to give the girl ten thousand rupees, then by all means he should do so. If afterwards, his condition deteriorates due to a change of circumstances, and he is unable to give anything to his second daughter, no blame shall be on him because when he offered the first one [her dowry], his intention was to give [an equivalent dowry] to all [of his daughters], but now his circumstances have changed.

Refrain from Displaying Bid'at and Extravagance

Briefly, *Bid'at* is any practice that people rigidly adhere to despite the absence of any definite command [regarding it]. It is not supported within Islam, nevertheless it is considered compulsory due to people's opinions. This is for purposes of show only. To practice it is an extravagance and God Almighty has declared the extravagant to be the brethren of Satan. Therefore, one should protect oneself from this and strive to shun as many destructive *Bid'ats* as one can.

(*Misbah*, May 15, 1930)

Address to the Ladies at Jalsa Salana

Delivered by Hazrat Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad, Khalifat-ul-Masih II[ra]

December 1930

After *Tashahhud*, *Ta'awwuz,* and recitation of *Surah Al-Fatihah*, Hazrat Khalifat-ul-Masih II[ra] recited the following verse:

وَ اِذۡ قَالَ رَبُّكَ لِلۡمَلٰٓئِكَةِ اِنِّیۡ جَاعِلٌ فِی الۡاَرۡضِ خَلِیۡفَةً ؕ قَالُوۡۤا اَتَجۡعَلُ
فِیۡهَا مَنۡ یُّفۡسِدُ فِیۡهَا وَ یَسۡفِكُ الدِّمَآءَ ۚ وَ نَحۡنُ نُسَبِّحُ بِحَمۡدِكَ
وَ نُقَدِّسُ لَكَ ؕ قَالَ اِنِّیۡۤ اَعۡلَمُ مَا لَا تَعۡلَمُوۡنَ ۝

"And when thy Lord said to the angels, 'I am about to place a vicegerent in the earth,' they said, 'Wilt Thou place therein such as will cause disorder in it, and shed blood? And we glorify Thee with Thy Praise and extol Thy Holiness,' He answered, 'I know what you know not.'"

(Holy Qur'ān, Ch. 2: V. 31)

Hazrat Khalifat-ul-Masih II[ra] stated:

There are two kinds of *Khulafa* in the world: those who are appointed by man and those who are commissioned by God through revelation. The *Khalifa* ordained on the basis of revelation is called a 'Prophet'. The arrival of revelation-bearing *Khulafa* create dissension in the world, not because they themselves create dissension, but because people have conflicting dispositions.

In this *rukū'*, Allah the Almighty relates the incident of Hazrat Adam's[as] birth. When the angels said, "Will you create therein such a person who will create disorder in the earth?" In other words, the angels posed the point that although the intention appears to be for the sake of bringing about something positive, the reality would be that it would be a cause for disorder. In this regard, God Almighty said, "I know what you know not. I establish a *Khalifa* so that the good are

distinguished from the bad.

The Holy Qur'ān has straightaway addressed this question. With the advent of every prophet, disorder has been created in the earth, for which the prophets were held responsible. As with earlier prophets, it was commonly said during the time of the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa], that he created rifts between one brother and the other brother. Now, at the time of the Promised Messiah[as], people claim the same thing, that he is the founder of discord. There were already seventy-two sects, and he has now made Ahmadis the seventy-third faction. They assert that the divisions should have decreased, but on the contrary, one more has been added. Perhaps those of you, who are non-Ahmadi, also feel the same way. Therefore, let me first clarify this issue.

The first question is that of bloodshed and disorder. Keep in mind, in regard to this, the Holy Qur'ān has described the situation [which previously existed] before the advent of a prophet in these words:

ظَهَرَ الْفَسَادُ فِي الْبَرِّ وَ الْبَحْرِ

"Corruption has appeared on land and sea…"
(Holy Qur'ān, Ch. 30: V. 42)

In other words, there was disorder in the land and at sea and this is what always occurs. Now, we should examine whether only one sect existed in this world before the arrival of the Promised Messiah[as], or was this dissension already present? Did the Shi'ites and the Hanafis already exist before this or not? Were disputes not already present over rituals such as the *Eleventh* [a ceremony], *Amīn Bil-Jahar* [saying *Amīn* loudly], and *Rafa'Yadain* [raising hands during Salāt], and so on? If you ponder over this, you will realize that before this, there existed great disorder, to which there was no limit. One is embarrassed simply by hearing of it. In Afghanistan, the fingers of hundreds of people were mutilated, only because they raised the index finger during *Tashahhud* in *Attahayaat* [a section of the Salāt] and according to the Hanafi school of thought, this voided the Salāt. A friend narrated that once a person from *Ahl-e-Hadith* [a Muslim sect] went to offer Salāt in congregation with Hanafis in their mosque. He

raised his index finger in *Attahayaat*. He had just raised his finger, when the whole group of followers discontinued their Salāt and jumped upon him, shouting "Wicked man, wicked man!"

Thus, such troublemakers already existed before the arrival of the Promised Messiah[as]. The Promised Messiah[as] came to reform. Who is the troublemaker? The one who causes injury or the doctor who intends to treat it with a scalpel? If one's mouth is bitter due to fever, and the physician prescribes Quinine [an extremely bitter medicine used in India], no one will say that this was the act of a cruel person who caused his mouth to be bitter. If a doctor does not remove phlegm, the body's condition deteriorates. What possible objection could there be to removing phlegm? How could a patient's condition improve if a bone remained broken, a wound was not cleaned by a scalpel, or a stringent medicine was not applied? The patient's life would be endangered. Considering the situation, how could anyone consider the doctor to be the wrongdoer?

Once, a person asked the Promised Messiah[as] about this division. He said, "Very well, tell me, in order to preserve your good milk, do you mix it with yogurt, or do you keep it separate?" It is obvious that if good milk is mixed with yogurt, it cannot stay wholesome for even one minute. Hence, it was essential to separate godly people from the unfortunate ones. Just as if one does not take precautionary measures when visiting the sick a healthy person may contract a disease, likewise, it is the practice of God Almighty to separate the godly people from spiritual illnesses.

Therefore, God Almighty has commanded that funeral, weddings, Salāt etc., should be observed separately [from non-Ahmadis]. It is generally women who dispute this matter; therefore, I will advise women. Just as the life of one who is healthy is endangered by contact with the sick, remember that the same could happen if one maintains [familial] relationships with non-Ahmadis. Most women say, how can a relationship between a brother and sister be severed? Truly, I can say to you that if there is an earthquake or if a fire breaks out, a sister will not care for her brother, but would rather push him away and seek to escape as quickly as she could from the collapsing roof. Then why is religion viewed any differently? The fact is that

these sentiments are those of peacetime, not of periods of hardship. If tonight, God sends the angel of death to any of you and he says, "Although I am commanded to take the soul of your brother or another dear one, but let it be I will take your soul instead" no woman would accept this. God Almighty says:

يٰٓاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا قُوْٓا اَنْفُسَكُمْ وَ اَهْلِيْكُمْ نَارًا

"O ye who believe! Save yourselves and your families from Fire."
(Holy Qur'ān, Ch. 66: V. 7)

Which means, save yourself and your family from the fire. If a follower of the Promised Messiah[as] is married to a non-Ahmadi, she will certainly drift away from Ahmadiyyat due to her husband, or she will grieve herself to death. She will be isolated from her relatives because of religious intolerances. This is one manner of fire [torment]. Would you push your daughter into the fire with your own hands? For the sake of a short-lived relationship, you put her in an eternal fire, and so you should avoid this.

The divisions that arose at the advent of the Promised Messiah[as] were already present, they were not new. However, if you make sacrifices, then others will be inspired to see that this is how the divisions can be eradicated. For example, as an Ahmadi, do not marry non-Ahmadis. Be a good role model so that they may be convinced. If as an Ahmadi, you continue to maintain the same relationship with them, they will ask, "We can establish relations with them as it is. What is the point of becoming an Ahmadi?"

Remember, this is a sin against the nation. If you sever relationships with them completely and offer this sacrifice for the sake of God, then on the one hand where God will grant you better marriage proposals than those relatives, on the other hand as a reward for your steadfastness, He will bring you together with those relatives as well. However, the condition is that you do not allow your steadfastness to slip. Do not believe that God will separate you forever. No, absolutely not! He will unite you and will unite you forever. He sees your perseverance. Sever your relationships for the sake of God and remain bowed down before God's will. In the end, your relatives will be

forever reunited with you.

Once, I had a dream of a *kabbadi* [wrestling] match being held. There were two parties, Ahmadi and non-Ahmadi. One by one, the members of the Ahmadi team were bringing the opposing team's players onto their side, until none were left except one large man. He crept along the wall until he finally reached the Ahmadis, where he stood up and said, "When the rest of them had all come over to you, what was I to do there all by myself?" There is a lesson in this for you. It is God's firm decision that He will unite you with your relatives. However, if you yourself go against His decisions and maintain these relationships, then take heed that they will continue to draw further and further away from you, for your actions are against the will of God Almighty. His anger will divide you for the rest of time.

It is related that Hazrat 'Umar[ra] was a very fierce opponent of the Holy Prophet[sa]. So much so, that he so brutally beat his slave-girl for accepting Islam to the point that she lost her eyes. Once, when the disbelievers hatched a plan to kill the Holy Prophet[sa], Hazrat 'Umar[ra] resolved to take up the gauntlet. Someone who came to know of his intention, told him to take care of his own home first, as his sister and brother-in-law had also become followers of the Holy Prophet[sa]. He immediately went to his sister's house where his sister and brother-in-law were listening to the recitation of the Holy Qur'ān from a companion[ra] of the Holy Prophet[sa]. They quickly hid the Holy Qur'ān.

After interrogating them, Hazrat 'Umar[ra] attacked his brother-in-law with his sword, but his sister intervened and was injured. Striking a woman was considered an act of cowardice, and therefore Hazrat 'Umar[ra] felt ashamed. To cover up his embarrassment upon witnessing his sister bleeding, he asked her to show him what they were reading. The brother-in-law wished to show him the Holy Qur'ān, but his sister passionately exclaimed, "You are unclean. How can you be shown this Holy Book?"

Hazrat 'Umar[ra], who had been greatly affected by his own action and the strength of his sister's faith melted, and immediately accepted Islam. This occurred because this woman was fully determined to abandon her honored brother, but not her sacred faith.

Hence, God softened Hazrat 'Umar's[ra] heart because of her steadfastness. After becoming Muslim, he became a devotee of Islam. If his sister had not shown such courage, the effect on Hazrat 'Umar[ra] would not have been so great, nor would brother and sister have been so closely united forever. Understand that this fruit was solely rewarded due to her sacrifice.

Thus, if you wish your relatives to join you, then make the sacrifice. God's lancet is for your own benefit and His punishment is for the sake of having mercy. He never punishes anyone unjustly. His Mercy is boundless. He Himself says:

وَ رَحْمَتِیْ وَسِعَتْ

[*"My mercy encompasses all things."*]

(Holy Qur'ān, Ch. 7: V. 157)

My mercy is vast. Thus, how can you expect cruelty from Him, who has abundant mercy? No single action of His depicts any cruelty. Hell is only a hospital for reprimand and correction, where some stay for a few days, others a few weeks, a few months, and still others stay for years. Just as no one remains admitted in a worldly hospital for all time, similarly that hospital (Hell) is not forever. Paradise is home and Hell is a hospital. God would never force his servants to suffer eternally. One *Hadith* narrates that ultimately, the doors of Hell will swing open with the breeze of Paradise, thus cooling it. This is evidence of abundant mercy.

Therefore, the separation from your relatives is for the sake of admonition and progress, not as an act of cruelty and harshness. In the same way, a baby's separation from its mother's womb is beneficial and essential for its growth. Does any mother dislike the parting of her baby from her womb [at birth]? Does she ever lament, "Oh why has my baby been removed from my womb?" She will never say this, for she understands that this separation will open the avenues for the baby's growth and development. It could not make much progress by remaining in the womb.

Thus, God Almighty cuts you off from your relatives, so that you may be reunited with them after having made lasting progress.

عَلَّمَ اٰدَمَ الْاَسْمَآءَ

"He taught Adam all the names,"

(Holy Qur'ān, Ch. 2: V. 32)

God told the angels that in this division of factions (which appear to you to be divisions), is a school, and the purpose of such separation is to communicate knowledge.

If sisters, brothers, and parents all stay together, their education cannot be completed. However, when their schools are separate, they can complete their educational schooling. A boy, who is specifically sent to school, realizes that he has been separated from his relatives for the sole purpose of education. In this way, both the student and the teacher are conscious of this obligation and the objective is achieved. By staying together the whole time this awareness could never be realized. Therefore,

عَلَّمَ اٰدَمَ الْاَسْمَآءَ

"He taught Adam all the names,"

(Holy Qur'ān, Ch. 2: V. 32)

[this] means that God appointed a *Khalifa* to perfect all aspects and areas of learning, so that he could distinguish individuals, educate them, and provide them with knowledge of God's attributes to pass onto His creation. Hence, this separation is not a hardship, but a mercy. It is impossible for you to achieve nearness to God without isolating yourselves from the spiritually sick. Now, by separating yourself, you have found God. Hence, you have attained this most priceless blessing, for which however grateful you may be, is still insufficient. Therefore, do not be agitated by this separation from your relatives and do not falter. I reiterate my advice to you. Do not maintain relationships with those relatives, who are spiritually severed from you. Do not participate in their funerals, etc. Do not make yourselves the object of God's wrath, simply based on these relationships.

Following this, I would also like to say something concerning the knowledge about God Almighty.

The Most Important Thing is Knowledge Regarding God

Many women may believe they are knowledgeable regarding God, but in actuality, they do not know God. If they did know Him, they would have absolute faith in Him. As a result of not understanding Him, many women promptly associate every action and every consequence with *taqdir* [destiny]. This is evidence of their unfamiliarity with God and their ignorance of His attributes.

Remember, your understanding of *predestination* is incorrect. You blame God Almighty for the ill consequences of your own mistakes, claiming it to be fate. What you do not comprehend, is that God, the Supreme King of the Heavens and the Earth, has no desire to cause pain to some or to bring happiness to others, to make one cry and others laugh. What benefit could He gain from this? Does any mother hope that one of her sons lives and the other dies, that one is blind and the other has sight, or that one is sick and the other is healthy? This is ignorant thinking. Much of our nation's downfall is due to this [false understanding of the] doctrine of predestination. Due to this, our efforts have gone wasted, our endeavors crippled, and all our struggles rendered fruitless.

You must fully understand that this premise of fate is completely erroneous. God Almighty has established rules. Whoever properly followed these rules succeeded, and those who deviated from them failed. For example, at this Jalsa, many [women] are sitting at the back and many in the front. Was it God who arranged them to sit in this manner? Granted, the organizers may have played a role to some degree, however there is still a definitive difference between the first comers and the latecomers. Those who arrived early found a good place in the front and those who came later, sat further back. What role did destiny play in this?

Once during the time of Hazrat 'Umar[ra], some individuals wished to leave the area due to the plague, and Hazrat 'Umar[ra] agreed. However, as happens today, there were those who disagreed, and who put forth this same concept of predestination saying:

اَتَفِرُّؤنَ مِنْ قَدَرِاللّٰهِ

"Do you run from Divine decree?"

Yet, how exquisitely did Hazrat ‘Umar[ra] reply! He answered:

اَفِرُّ مِنْ قَدَرِاللّٰهِ اِلٰى قَدَرِاللّٰهِ

“I am going from one Divine decree to another.”

Think! If it is fate for a man to fall sick due to an insect bite, then is it not also fate for the doctor to give him medicine for him to become well? You believe in one fate and not the other.

Your example is like that of the *marasi* who sits idly by. His wife urges him to work, but he makes excuses that he cannot find any work. Finally, she suggests that he join the army during their recruitment campaign. He says, “Perhaps you wish for my death, for recruitment is for war, and war means death.” To teach him a lesson, the wife mills some grain in the grindstone. Some grains remain unbroken, and others are completely crushed. She shows her husband, “Look, not all the grains were crushed in the grindstone. Some remained intact. Why then, do you believe that war signifies death for everyone?” He said, “Count me among the crushed grain.”

Do you believe that a child falls ill because of its mother’s rebuke or dies due to her curse? Yet, when discussing God Almighty, you brashly and boldly claim that this adversity is God’s will. If you perceive God as the Supreme Master, then you must also think of Him as the Merciful. Why do you perceive Him to be cruel? What benefit does God derive by making your child fall ill? You exposed him to the cold, you neglected him, and you were careless, causing him to develop pneumonia. Now you blame God rather than accepting your own negligence. Your child grew up illiterate, because you did not inculcate in him the love of learning. You did not discipline him, you did not keep him from wandering about, yet now you evoke destiny for your own misdeeds. When did God’s angels dictate that your child be illiterate? When did they snatch away your child’s books? When did they block his way to school? It is this concept of destiny, which has deprived our country of God’s blessings. Observe how this very country’s English children are healthy, but yours are sick; the English are educated, but yours remain uneducated; the English are affluent, but you are impoverished; they are highly esteemed and cheerful,

whereas you are pessimistic and disheartened. This is not due to divine decree being their friend and your enemy. The sole reason for this is that they acted according to the laws of nature, or you could say that they made proper use of the "machinery" of the world and benefited from it. However, you have been the losers, due to your waywardness and disregard for rules. When a child falls sick due to your negligence, your foolishness, or your ignorance, you associate this with divine decree. You neither accept your mistake nor do you attempt to reform yourself. You do not take care to train your children properly and when they are spoiled and dissolute you say, "Indeed, it was destined." Remember well, this is all due to negligence and disregarding the laws of nature. God has established these rules, and those who follow them will be successful, and those who break them will be destroyed. Once again, I will instruct you not to use destiny as an excuse to blame God.

عَلَّمَ اٰدَمَ الْاَسْمَآءَ

["*He taught Adam all the names"*]
(Holy Qur'ān, Ch. 2: V. 32)

He [God] taught Adam His attributes. What is referred to here is the knowledge about God, or in other words, the understanding of His attributes. You belong to a Jama'at chosen by God. It is vital for you to develop an awareness of Him. You should forget about fate. Associate fate with God only upon pleasant occasions. Understand that He is the All Powerful, the Merciful, the Gracious, and He is the One who resolves difficulties. Hazrat Abraham[as] expressed the concept of destiny very exquisitely when he said, "I fall sick, God bestows health; I remain ignorant, and God grants me knowledge; I am neglectful and He confers awareness." Consequently, you should also desist from attributing cruel actions to God. Remove your own slackness and shortcomings from yourself. Practice the rules ordained by Him in an appropriate manner, so that this adversity may be removed from you. Take care to remember this instruction, so that this issue no longer re-surfaces within our Jama'at.

The Second Issue is Prayer

Prayer is a weapon which cuts through whatever it strikes at.

God Almighty says to His Holy Prophet[sa], "O my Messenger! Say to My people, what cares my Lord for you, if you do not stay connected with Him through prayer?" [Holy Qur'an Ch. 25: V. 78] Yet sadly in our country, prayer is valued less than a broken shoe, even though Islam has granted us such a weapon [prayer], that no matter how much pride we exhibit upon possessing such a weapon, it will not be enough. Prayer is the stairway between the Creator and His creation.

Once the Promised Messiah[as] in a dream saw a ditch which had been dug out and sheep were lying there waiting to be sacrificed. When the Promised Messiah[as] arrived there, people said, "We were waiting for you, so that we might slaughter them." At that moment, a vision conveyed the knowledge to the Promised Messiah[as] that the sheep represented those who were sinners. A voice was then heard:

قُلْ مَا يَعْبَؤُا بِكُمْ رَبِّيْ لَوْ لَا دُعَآؤُكُمْ ۚ

"Say; But for your prayer to Him, my Lord would not care for you."
(Holy Qur'ān, Ch. 25: V. 78)

Pray to God for your hardships to be remitted. The most difficult problems can be resolved through prayer. If there was no prayer, human existence would have certainly remained unfulfilled.

The Messiah of Nazareth[as] very exquisitely stated, "Man does not subsist on bread, but rather on the words of God." Therefore, first is the knowledge of God and secondly prayer is essential for human existence. Without it your lives are useless, and your efforts remain fruitless. Do not wonder over those vast kingdoms who do not believe in God and yet still remain prosperous. They may be [wealthy], yet being a King is no great achievement. Anyone who is proud of this is very foolish. Have you not witnessed that the destitute street sweeper cries out in agony or great pain at the time of death in the same way a powerful yet agnostic King does?

Examine the lives of the prophets who remain unaffected by the stresses of time and who never grieved over suffering, for they confronted misfortune boldly and with ease. Indeed, their hearts are filled with more contentment than any worldly King, even if he be the

ruler of the entire world. The reason is that a worldly King relies on material means, whereas a messenger of God, owing to his strong bond with God, remains completely unperturbed under the protection of His Protector. Even though he is almost devoid of material means, there is no one who can attain his level of bliss and contentment.

What kingdom or power did the Promised Messiah[as] possess? Nevertheless, he remained unaffected by the difficulties and hardships of the time. He[as] prophesied that the Czar of Russia, who was a great King, would be denigrated to an extremely helpless state. Thus, that is what occurred. Now consider the former might of the Czar, and following this prophecy, his utter helplessness. Thus, we come to realize that kings have no worth. They are like the dead left in the hands of the living. However, the beloved of God possess authority in every aspect.

There is an incident of a saintly old man who lived in Delhi. At that time, the King, became angry with him. While the King was away, an enemy spread a rumor [against the saint], over which the King decided to punish the saint with death as soon as he returned home. People told the saint that he should flee from there before the King's arrival or he should ask for forgiveness. Yet, he remained quiet. The King approached closer to Delhi. News spread that the King was furious with the holy man and upon his return, he planned to mete out a punishment as a lesson to him. The well-wishers again gave the same advice, but he replied, "Let him come. After all, he is a King, not God." It was then relayed that the King's convoy would arrive the next morning. Even when the King drew closer to Delhi, this saintly man very assuredly stated, "*Hanooz Delhi doorast*" [Delhi is still far]. The listeners were astounded that the holy man was saying he was far from Delhi, when the King was only moments away. However, that very night, the King died of colic. He was never destined to enter Delhi.

There is an incident related concerning the Holy Prophet[sa] who by worldly standards appeared to be in a state of extreme poverty and helplessness. Yet, despite this apparent destitution, reports of his[sa] prophethood and progress continuously reached the King of Iran, who despite being a King, feared the Holy Prophet[sa]. Finally, he sent the Governor of Arabia an order to arrest him[sa]. Men came to the Holy

Prophet[sa] with the royal order and clearly stated, “Do not resist. Hand yourself over quietly. The King is very powerful, and you must follow his order and come to Iran. This is in your best interest.” He[sa] replied, “I will give you an answer tomorrow.” The next day, he[sa] told them, “Listen, last night my God killed your god. Go back.” When the men returned, they repeated to the Governor exactly what they had heard. The Governor was shocked and waited for the mail to come from Iran, where he received information that the King’s own son had killed him on the very night that the Holy Prophet[sa] had conveyed [his message]. The letter also stated, “My father was very cruel. I have killed him. I am now the King. My father had ordered an Arab to be unjustly killed. Now that he is dead, I declare this order void.”

Now, can you see that in this world, possessing authority and kingdom is worth nothing. The true objective should be to have protection from dangers, and only those who have a bond with God, who believe in His attributes and seek His help through prayers can be in security. Remember that God does accept the prayers, however, he does so in accordance with the rules [He has prescribed]. This is in accordance with the law of nature also; can a *roti* [flatbread] be made by flinging flour against a wall? Rather, a *roti* can only be made by following the procedure established for it. Thus, prayer will only be accepted when the rules which are set for its acceptance are followed. Now I pray that God Almighty grant you the ability to understand, *Amīn*.

(*Misbah,* January 15, 1931)

Duty of Ahmadi Women at this Time

Delivered by Hazrat Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad, Khalifat-ul-Masih II[ra]

Fifty years ago, if a Muslim woman from any respectable family in India was asked to go to the station wearing her *burqa*, she would have refused. She would have travelled in a *doli* and then entered the train with the curtains pulled down around her. The windows of the train would all be closed, and upon reaching the destination, she would exit in the same manner. At that time, could anyone have imagined that conditions would change in such a way? Nonetheless, look around you. An epidemic has spread from thousands of miles away. Under its influence, Indian women casually walk down the streets with men, even holding hands. These are the same women, whose grandmothers arrived in their homes [as brides] in *dolis* and later left from there in their caskets [upon their death]. At that time, Indian Muslims believe themselves to be absolutely safe, for they had no intention of abandoning their values and traditions. And yet, is it possible for one human being to remain unaffected by another? Just as clouds and locusts travel from thousands of miles away and destroy crops, ideas from thousands of miles away can destroy our own values, and we cannot remain safe unless an impenetrable circle is formed around us.

There are two types of circles. One is spiritual and the other worldly. The spiritual circle is [attained] when a person places one's hand in the hand of the Apostle of that time, or that one places one's hand at the hands of those who followed him, or one places one's hand in the hands of the successive generations of followers. This is the spiritual circle which the future Jama'ats follow, and despite the excess of mischief and evil, they will remain largely protected from it and will receive the Help of God Almighty. Thus, observe how at the present time when the whole world is in turmoil, the Ahmadiyya Jama'at is safe by the Grace of God Almighty. The Ahmadiyya Jama'at is under Divine protection solely due to its pledge to the Promised Messiah[as].

Thus, one means of security is closeness to a prophet. The second method is instructed in the Holy Qur'ān which states:

وَ مَا كَانَ اللّٰهُ لِيُعَذِّبَهُمْ وَ اَنْتَ فِيْهِمْ ۚ وَ مَا كَانَ

اللّٰهُ مُعَذِّبَهُمْ وَ هُمْ يَسْتَغْفِرُوْنَ ۝

"But Allah would not punish them while thou wast among them, and Allah would not punish them while they sought forgiveness."

(Holy Qur'ān, Ch. 8: V. 34)

This means that people who try to destroy the instruments of evil are saved from punishment. However, it is the job of a believer to strive in eliminating vices. Whereas it is impossible to completely eradicate filth, man can be protected from its stench by burying it in a hole and covering it up with dirt. In the same way, we cannot totally eliminate evil from the world, but we can control it. Thus, the second method is to contain the evil and prevent it from spreading. The way to do this is to bring those who spread vices into our community and consequently, put a stop to their bad intentions. Hence, there are two ways to safeguard against destruction: one is an attachment to the Prophet and being part of his Jama'at, and the other is making an effort to curb evils. Where both come together, it is as if light radiates further light.

In India, the trend towards completely abandoning *purdah* is spreading. These people blame *purdah* for their downfall, even though those who abandon *purdah* are enslaved by others. In other words, they have adopted mental and spiritual slavery, and those of us who consider *purdah* necessary are free from this because we thoroughly oppose that culture which they believe is the means of their advancement. According to us, [what is] seemingly [considered] slavery holds no importance. After all, someone must obviously govern the country. Even if this government belonged to Indians themselves, would all of them rule? Only a section would govern.

Hence, outward slavery is nothing. In actual fact, it is mental slavery which is dangerous. Therefore, those who abandon *purdah* are

turning into complete slaves of Europe. They say *purdah* leads to their decline, whereas [the reality is] that Muslims conquered the world while adopting *purdah*. The wives of Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] would observe *purdah*, but still participate in battles. In the battle of Siffin, Hazrat A'ishah[ra] commanded the army herself. At the time, the highest-ranking generals retreated, but she remained on the battleground. Thus, blaming one's own weakness on others is stupidity. *Purdah* is observed here in Qadian, but our women are far more educated than women from other areas. Once, I made an inquiry and discovered that while there are very few illiterate girls, there are many more illiterate boys, and yet *purdah* is properly observed. Then there are many girls who have taken the Maulvi examination, and several are now preparing for FA [college] after having passed the entrance exam. In contrast, those who oppose *purdah* remain engulfed in the same illiteracy and darkness. Undoubtedly, they have more resources and if they tried, they could overtake us; however, their progress will be the result of their wealth and not a direct result of discarding *purdah*.

It should also be noted that those who abandon *purdah* are supported by the government. The wife of the governor was strongly opposed to *purdah*, so much so that she refused to go to a *Purdah* Club, because she believed it to be insulting. Many Muslim women abandoned *purdah* solely because they did not wish to be deprived of meeting the governor's wife.

People of our Jama'at should remember that our responsibility goes beyond convincing people of the death of Jesus[as]. Although this is very important, it is also our duty to confront movements such as atheism, aversion to Islamic injunctions, and the [erroneous] belief that Islam does not give rights to women.

The best way to combat this is to fully establish a system of education for women. If we tell those women, who are determined to disobey the Islamic commandments, that they tread on a harmful and detrimental path, they will not listen to our advice due to their prior convictions. They will respond, "You men are tyrants, and you have deprived women of their rights." However, if women go to them and

say, “We can tell you from our own knowledge and experience that Islamic teachings are superior and most beneficial,” then they will be affected. If this movement among women is confronted by women, it will be more successful than if men confront them. If women tell them that they receive all their rights by following Islamic teachings, then others will wonder, ‘If these women are taking advantage of this, then why should we not do so also?’

It was for this reason that I raised the question of women’s rights to representation in the *Majlis-e-Mushawarat.* I wrote a letter from England in 1924, in which I said a movement against *purdah* would arise in India. At that time, my articles were published in *Al-Fazl*, including this letter. Several years earlier, I had warned of this movement against *purdah,* which began two years ago. For this very reason, I had brought up the issue of women’s rights to representation in the *Majlis-e-Shura*. It is our responsibility to give women whatever rights the *Shariah* has accorded them, so that they become inclined to Islamic teachings. Unless they themselves are passionate about this, they cannot invite others to follow Islamic teachings or preach to other women. No one from among you could declare that *Madrassa* Ahmadiyya or *Jami‘a Ahmadiyya* [a religious school] should be eliminated, for we all know that unless there are missionaries, there can be no propagation.

Therefore, pressure is being put on the *Majlis-e-Shura* to increase the number of missionaries. How can one believe that this movement among women against Islamic teaching can be halted, unless women take up the work of *tabligh*? However, how can a woman preach to others, if she views herself as a victim? Therefore, both aspects are important: women must be provided with an education, and they must also be given their rights. We should ourselves give women the rights accorded to them by Islam, so that they develop a passion to fight the battle of Islam as if it is their own battle. In women’s gatherings, men cannot deliver speeches, only women can; and only women can record what is said in women’s meetings. Therefore, we should prepare women for this task, and they should be granted the rights allocated to them by Islam.

In recent days, a young man came here from out of town,

having disputed with his wife. He wrote to me that a holy man had advised him to strike her with a stick if she did not listen to him. Upon reading this, I was ashamed and wondered how he could consider such a person to be holy who advises him to beat his wife?! Piety lies in instituting Islamic teachings and not in dismissing it. It is possible that a person could subdue his wife by beating her, but he does not strike his wife, rather he strikes at Islam because his wife and other women acquainted with her will feel apathetic towards such a religion. Beating may result in peace at his home, but it will be an attempt to ravage the house of Islam. So, if that so-called saintly man is present here now, he should listen well. He is not considered righteous in the sight of God. In fact, he is the lowest of the low. This world can only find peace with justice, equity, and compassion. Unless this is done, success cannot be attained.

In short, women should be educated, given good training, and they should be provided the extent of freedom allowed by Islam. In fact, Islam has given them freedom. Actually, it should be said that men should not try to confine women beyond the limits set by Islam, for just as we have intellect, so do women. I expect the Qadian Jama‘at in general and the outside Jama‘ats in particular, to pay attention to this matter.

There are many issues which the National Jama‘at should pay more attention to and there are other issues which demand more attention from Jama‘ats outside [Qadian]. This issue pertains in particular to the external Jama‘ats. They should ensure that women understand the issues regarding *purdah*. After the [men] fully reassure them, the [women] should provide a means to eliminate false accusations against Islam. They [the Jama‘ats] should strive to enlighten and instruct women about Islam, so that they can meet other women and reform their points of view. If this movement grows, it will be very difficult to overcome it. Matters which can be solved easily in the beginning, become far more difficult to solve later.

(*Misbah,* February 1, 1931)

Address at the Inauguration of the FA Class

Delivered by Hazrat Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad, Khalifat-ul-Masih II[ra]

In 1925, my intention to prioritize religious education was based upon the principle that women may thus be able to receive religious education whilst they are pursuing secular education. I prioritized the religious education [at an earlier age] with the view that religious education is not so interesting or appealing [as certain aspects of secular education] and therefore it is difficult to acquire religious education at a later stage in life. In this way, after women acquire some degree of religious education, they may then pursue an English education also. Since this [English education] is more appealing, there should be no problem in acquiring it later. First, we began with Arabic classes for the girls. At that time, people in and outside of Qadian criticized this, in particular the *Paighami* [Lahori Jama'at] section ridiculed it. However, by the grace of God Almighty, not only in Punjab, but in the whole of India, this is the first instance of our girls passing the *Maulvi Fazl* exam [a degree in Islamic education] in such large numbers. I believe the number of our girls who passed the exam this year is greater than the number of girls in all of India, who have passed the *Maulvi Fazl* exam in the past years. After this, as they were eligible to take higher education classes in the girls' school. Higher education classes were established with the help of high school teachers. By God's grace, this was also a success and this year, seven students successfully passed their entrance exam. This in itself, is unprecedented, as never before have seven Muslim girls from one school been successful in the same year. Since we have continuously advocated the education of women in our Jama'at, several girls from outside of Qadian have also passed the entrance exam with commendable scores. In fact, one Ahmadi girl has achieved second position among the girls and thirteenth or fourteenth position among boys.

My intention is that their education should advance in this manner, until we have so many women graduates, that we can place female staff in the school and establish a college as well. The

government has now imposed a condition for men, which forbids them from taking the private exam, however this condition does not apply to women. Before Punjab University applies this condition to women, we should produce a large enough population [of graduates] to educate our future generations and fulfill our educational needs.

I have pondered over this extensively. Unless women become involved in our work, we cannot be successful. The majority of issues involve women, including the matter of our children's moral training, which specifically relates to women. This cannot be addressed until women are educated and they are put in charge of this task. No matter how educated a woman is or how well she trains her children inside the home, she cannot be successful [on her own] because children are influenced by the children in their surroundings and the only way every child can be well trained, is if a large number of educated women come together.

Boarding homes for young children should be established and put under the supervision of women, so that they may instill good manners in them in childhood. When these children are grown, their character can positively influence other's characters. Success cannot be attained without this united effort; neither speeches, nor lectures, nor sermons can produce success. National character will only be achieved when such boarding homes are established. Those whom God has given the ability, should enroll their children in them. Their supervisors should be women. Young children should board there, starting from an early age to the age of seven or eight years, during which good morals will be instilled in them. This group will then impress their characters upon others. Keeping these boys and girls together in one place for training up to the age of seven or eight can cause no harm but [conversely] could prove to be extremely beneficial to the nation. If we can establish such boarding homes and thus, develop good morals, such training would distinguish our Jama'at from others. However, this goal cannot be achieved without enough educated women, which is why I believe women's colleges are more important than men's colleges. This does not mean that we do not require men's colleges. We do need them, but at present, we are unable to fulfill the official requirements pertaining to them. However, in my opinion, even if we could fulfill those requirements, a women's

college is still more important, for men can reside away from home, but it is more difficult for women to do so.

Keeping these facts in mind, as Nazir Sahib has mentioned, we are starting this work with minimal resources. We expect the high school teachers to continue to work hard to educate our girls in the future, as they have done in the past. It has come to my knowledge that geography has been selected as the subject for the F.A. class of women. I have heard that usually, students do not take this subject, perhaps because the subject is not considered useful or because the exam is difficult, and few boys pass. In reality, this is a subject which lacks sequential order and is therefore difficult to memorize. Those subjects with sequences can be memorized quickly, for one point leads to another.

I have learned that those who take the philosophy exam, achieve higher scores because the subject is taught in a sequential manner. I believe it would be better if a man is prepared for this subject. Our professor, Qazi Muhammad Aslam, is an expert in this field. During the upcoming school vacation, [select someone] to learn the main points of the subject from him or someone else, and [based upon this learning], teach the girls this subject. Greater success can be expected by adopting this method. As this is our first attempt, we should adopt the path which is more likely to lead towards success. Philosophy also aids in the training of children; therefore, this subject should certainly be taught. I expect those who are in charge to strive to achieve this goal.

I will now pray, and everyone should join in, that God Almighty grants us success in our endeavors, that He removes any weaknesses in our means, and grants us the best outcome. May He bestow such favors that women advance intellectually and produce the best means of training for our future generations.

(*Al-Fazl*, July 7, 1931, pp. 6-7)

Instill Courage and Bravery in Women

Excerpt from Friday Sermon
Delivered by Hazrat Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad,
Khalifat-ul-Masih II[ra]

The Holy Prophet Muhammad's[sa] Practical Example

Even during peacetime, the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] would encourage friendly competition among his companions, which would include archery and other skills of war and demonstrations of strength and vigor. It is stated in a *Hadith* that the Holy Prophet[sa] would arrange these types of contests in the mosque as well. He said to Hazrat A'ishah[ra], "If you wish to watch, you may stand behind me and look over my shoulder." Ignorant people allege this *Hadith* to be false, because it contends that the Holy Prophet[sa] would watch contests despite the fact that it is this quality that Muslims have abandoned which has led them to their ruin. Islam enjoins vigilance and a readiness to face the enemy at any time, and alongside this, it has endeavored to save women from cowardice.

A Reason for the Fall of the Mughal Empire

The downfall of the Mughal empire in India was due in large part to women's cowardliness and men harboring an excessive love for women. At the time of mutiny, the British allies saw that the rebels were strategically placed so that the British troops would be in the line of fire and would thus be defeated. They sent a message to Zeenat Mahal (she was the King's favorite wife, who conspired with the British in the hopes that her son would inherit the throne. Although at that time, the throne and monarchy existed in name only, she still desired it for her son). The message said that it would be to her advantage if she had the cannons removed, for their location could prove to be extremely dangerous for the British troops. It is thought that if the cannons had not been removed from that location, the outcome of the mutiny would have been the exact opposite. Zeenat Mahal said to the King, "My heart beats too fast

[from the noise of the cannons] and I may faint. Either have these cannons removed or kill me first." The King had the cannons removed at her request, which resulted in the loss of power for the Muslims. If this story is true, then the King was influenced by Zeenat Mahal's excuse, for he knew that she was unaccustomed to hearing the blast of the cannons. She could not have made this excuse, had the cannons been previously fired before her. For the King would have replied, "As you have heard their noise before, why would you collapse today?" Thus, the consequence of keeping women away from acts of bravery and courage, was that Zeenat Mahal was able to deceive the King.

The Wisdom behind Showing Military Exercises to Hazrat A'ishah[ra]

Hazrat A'ishah[ra] could not claim that her heart beat fast upon watching scenes of war, for the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] would show her military exercises and he always brought one of his wives with him during war expeditions. Some have deduced from this that it is a *Sunnah* to take one's wife along when traveling. Indeed it is, but a greater *Sunnah* is to inculcate courage and bravery in women, for unless they are brave, no nation can triumph. The greatest obstacle to national progress is women exhibiting cowardice. I remember that once someone fell from a ladder in our house. I was about to rush forward to save him, but my wife held me back and said, "Do not go forward." Finally, I had to push her away. Instead of admiring her husband for his bravery and courage, she did the exact opposite and wished to stop me. Thus, it is our Jama'at's duty to make women fearless. The companions of the Holy Prophet[sa] gained great benefit from their women's bravery.

Muslim Women's Brilliant Actions During a Critical Situation in the Battle of Yarmuk

At the Battle of Yarmuk, a perilous situation arose for Muslims. It is said that the Christian army numbered between six hundred thousand and one million and the Roman King intended to either destroy the Muslims or he would not return alive. Although he did not take part in the war himself, he made all the arrangements for

the army. He promised the commander of his army, whose name was most likely Haman, that if he succeeded he would marry his daughter to him. In this war, the Muslim army numbered sixty thousand, and the left wing of the army was defeated. First of all, if the wing of an army is defeated the risk is greatly increased that the enemy may encircle them and destroy the whole army. However, an army which is small to begin with has a low chance of survival, for the enemy can single out each and every person and kill them. If God's help had not been with them that day, the survival of even one single Muslim would have been miraculous, for the opposing army was very large and one wing had already been defeated.

At that time, Muslim women saved the army. Abū Sufyān[ra] was among the people who retreated. Although he was a very brave and high-ranking general and had performed many great deeds for Islam, he had to withdraw when the rest of the army retreated. At that time, his wife Hind, who was looked upon by Muslims with great aversion, moved forward with a stick in her hand and striking her husband's horse, said, "Have you no shame? As a disbeliever, you strongly stood against Islam but now as a follower of Islam, you retreat!" Abū Sufyān[ra] was a man of good heart. He was certainly a brave man; and he had only been forced to retreat because his companions withdrew. However, when Hind said these words, he called to his companions and shouted, "Come back! The death which finds us while retreating is far worse than the death which finds us on the battlefield!" Consequently, the Muslims rushed forward again and conquered the battlefield. A single phrase uttered by a woman changed the course of battle. It is further recorded that the women themselves fought for half an hour to guard the gap which had been left. They used poles, tent-walls and whatever else they could get a hold of to protect the field, until the Muslim army returned.

The Outcome of Khansa's Bravery in a War Against Iran

Similarly, during a battle against Iran, it was predicted that the Muslims would be crushed, because the previous day they had suffered heavy losses and nearly twenty thousand men were martyred. Muslims had never suffered these many casualties before.

At that time, there was a woman, who had three or four sons fighting in the battle. Firstly, if the woman had been from our country, she would have never sent any one of her sons to war but if she had been compelled to do so, she would have sent one or two and kept one or two with herself. She would have advised the one she was sending off and said, "Remember son, take care of your old mother and guard your life."

Look at the example of such a mother and compare to that elderly mother whose name was Khansa! After three days of battle when there appeared to be no chance of any Muslims surviving, due to the fact that the Muslims were up against elephants for the first time and the Muslims were being crushed under their feet, she told her sons, "I have never dishonored your forefather's reputation and in return for safeguarding your ancestor's honor, today I expect you to protect my honor and not retreat from the battlefield. If God Almighty gives you life, return triumphantly, but do not return while retreating." This lion-hearted woman's sons fought so well that day that everyone praised them. God Almighty was so pleased with her sincerity that all her sons returned alive.

One Muslim General's Wife

I will narrate another incident of a woman's bravery. Hazrat Sa'ad Bin Abi Waqas[ra] was a very courageous man and he had participated in many battles alongside the Holy Prophet[sa]. There is no doubt that later battles were not as fierce as those fought in the time of the Holy Prophet[sa] because at that time, the security of the Holy Prophet[sa] was to be taken into account also. After the time of the Holy Prophet[sa], Hazrat Sa'ad Bin Abi Waqas[ra] was made a general in a battle and was accompanied by his wife. She was the widow of another Muslim general and had married Hazrat Sa'ad Bin Abi Waqas[ra] after his death. Hazrat Sa'ad Bin Abi Waqas[ra] could not participate in the battle as he was afflicted with boils all over his body.

It is a woman's nature, whether she be a widow or divorcee, to refrain from mentioning her first husband in front of the second. If she truly respects her first husband and does not express [her

admiration of him] upon the mention of his name, she would consider that to be a betrayal. However, if she does act in this way, her second husband would become jealous. Hazrat Sa'ad[ra] was seated on high ground and was giving orders from there. He would write [his instructions] on pieces of paper and throw them down to the soldiers, who delivered them to the officers. The Iranians had a white elephant, which was especially large and which was especially trained for war. It had killed an entire tribe of Muslims, sparing no one. Hazrat Sa'ad[ra] sat restlessly, but due to his illness, he could not do anything except write orders. His wife was also very distressed when she saw the Muslims being crushed in this way. She inadvertently called out her first husband's name, "Alas, if only Musna was here today!"

Hazrat Sa'ad[ra] could not bear such a taunt because Hazrat Sa'ad[ra] had been the one to fight valiantly in battles alongside the Holy Prophet[sa]. If he had not been disabled, he would have certainly been present in the battlefield. However, his wife desired that he be on the battleground, no matter what. He grew extremely angry at her taunt and slapped her. The wife said, "What kind of bravery is this? You slap a woman, but you will not go out and confront the enemy, who is killing Muslims?" Hazrat Sa'ad[ra] was deeply affected by this because he realized that if his wife thought this, it was possible that other Muslims also believed that he was not out in the battlefield out of fear. Therefore, he assembled the whole army in the evening and removed his clothes to show them the boils which covered his body from head to toe.

The Duty of Lajna Imai'illah Members

Thus, in the early days, Muslim women accomplished remarkable things, for they were given the opportunity to participate in battles. The Holy Prophet[sa] always included them in battles. He[sa] taught them the art of battle and made them practice these skills. However, now Muslims have abandoned this practice. I have established Lajna Ima'illah, but it is in its infancy. A number of women show courage at times, but many lose heart and give up. It is our duty to make them courageous. And if we cannot prepare them to participate in war, at least we should instill them with enough

courage, that if one of us [men] must sacrifice his life for Islam, the women are happy to partake in the blessings rather than feel miserable. A man who leaves for battle leaving his family members broken-heartened, becomes disheartened. However, if he feels that his family, although saddened by his departure are also pleased, and whilst they pray for God Almighty's protection they will also be content if he is martyred, he will feel exceptional bravery and courage. If we believe our religion to be true, then what is death? It is only a door to reach God Almighty and what better reward than to face hardships in the way of God Almighty.

(*Misbah*, May 1, 1931)

An Appeal to Ahmadi Women for the Repair of the London Mosque

Written by Hazrat Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad, Khalifat-ul-Masih II[ra]

I would like to announce to all Ahmadi women that from the letters I have received from England they seem to indicate that the London Mosque, which was built solely with the donations of Ahmadi women and which made women of our Jama‘at famous the world over for their dedication and sacrifice, is in dangerous condition due to an engineering defect. The architectural experts have advised that the dome should be immediately repaired and encased in a way so as to fully protect it. Otherwise, the whole building will certainly be damaged.

On receiving this news, I deemed it appropriate to consult several companies, so that in this time of hardship, no unnecessary burden is placed on the Jama‘at. However, every expert who was consulted advised the urgent repair of the mosque, otherwise we risk losing the whole building. Because of this constraint, I have instructed Khan Sahib Farzand Ali Khan[ra], the *Imam* of the London Mosque, to designate a reliable company to begin repair work of the mosque. Meanwhile, I will appeal to the ladies of Jama‘at Ahmadiyya to give *chanda* to preserve their monument, so that this mosque continues to be associated solely with them. I have obtained estimates for the necessary repairs and the minimum estimate is six thousand rupees. However, as expenses usually exceed estimates, the real estimate should be between seven to eight thousand rupees.

Therefore, I appeal to the women of Jama‘at Ahmadiyya to collect this amount. There is no doubt, that if they disregard the necessity of these repairs after erecting such a magnificent monument, then just as they had become renowned due to their sacrifice in the first place, their subsequent negligence will disgrace them. This is because the mosque they have erected, is situated in the economic center of the world and people travel there from all over the world.

In my opinion, the actions of a Muslim are not for show, but are for the sake of God Almighty. Thus, our Jama‘at’s women, should in this time of extreme financial hardship, present a superior example of sacrifice, not to parade themselves before the world, but to raise their status before God Almighty. Following this it will be proven that a believer’s sacrifice is not determined by the extent of one’s wealth, but by the generosity of one’s heart. Even in times of hardship, she gives preference to religious obligation over every other matter.

Sisters! Remember, that at this present time, serving Islam is the responsibility of Ahmadis the world over. It is no ordinary blessing from God Almighty to be entrusted with such a magnificent responsibility. If we must sacrifice every single particle of our being to attain this reward, the sacrifice would pale in comparison to the blessings we will receive.

Thus, prove with your actions that if women of other nations are oblivious and unmindful of their religious and national responsibilities, then Ahmadi women are not like them. By God Almighty’s grace, He has given them such a heart and courage that whenever the call to serve their faith rings out, they say *‘Labbaik* [we are here].’ They harbor no regrets in serving their religion because their hearts are filled with joy to be given one more opportunity to attain Allah’s pleasure.

As we have already begun repairs on the mosque and money is needed urgently, *chanda* should be collected from Lajna Ima’illah, and where there is no Lajna, Anjuman Ahmadiyya should appeal to women directly for the repair of the mosque. Whatever is collected should be sent to the auditor of Sadr Anjuman Ahmadiyya.

As always, at the time of such an appeal, the question arises as to whether or not *chanda* should be accepted from a person who is not a member of the Jama‘at. Thus, I will answer that right now. At the time of the mosque’s construction, my instruction was for this building to be built solely from the funds of Ahmadi women. However, since the building has been erected and the question is only of repair and safety, if any [Ahmadi] sister’s friend happily wishes to contribute, her donation will be gladly accepted. Perhaps through this means, God

Almighty will open the doors of His bounties for her and make her the recipient of many more blessings.

As our women are not yet as organized as the men, I instruct Nazir Sahib, *Bait-ul-Mal* [Head of Treasury], and all provincial, district and local *Anjumans*, to especially arrange for this message to reach everywhere. Men should assume this responsibility to gather women and deliver this communication to them. They should assure that no woman is deprived of participating in this endeavor, regardless of whether the participation is large or small because gradually small efforts collectively become hugely blessed [and abundant].

Moreover, it is not acceptable to deprive any portion of the Jama'at from participating in virtuous deeds because this dampens that portion's feelings of sincerity, which ultimately injures the entire Jama'at. I pray to God Almighty that He enables all Ahmadi women to promptly carry out this responsibility; and that this great monument of theirs not only stands firm, but that God Almighty elevates it even higher.

وَآخِرُ دَعْوَاهُمْ أَنِ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ

And in the end, we proclaim that all praise belongs to Allah, Lord of all the worlds.

Khaksar [Humbly],
Mirza Mahmud Ahmad

(*Misbah,* September 1, 1931)

The Educational Progress of Ahmadi Women

Delivered by Hazrat Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad, Khalifat-ul-Masih II[ra]

September 13, 1931

On September 13, following 'Asr prayers, Lajna Ima'illah Sialkot hosted a grand tea reception in honor of Hazrat Khalifat-ul-Masih II[ra], to which certain dignitaries of the city were also invited. Following is Hazrat Khalifat-ul- Masih II's[ra] brief address at this occasion.

First of all, on behalf of my companions, the other guests, and myself, I would like to thank Lajna Ima'illah for this reception. Receptions are frequently held throughout the world, and it has become such a common occurrence that perhaps it has lost some of its charm. However, a reception which stems from feelings of excitement and sincerity is a source of great pleasure and peace of heart. The Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] told his companions that if their means allowed it, they should invite each other for a meal to promote mutual love and relationships. The Holy Prophet[sa] himself invited people to meals and ascribed it such importance that he said that turning down an invitation is against my *Sunnah.* As I know this reception is hosted by the Lajna with the same sincerity and spirit that the Holy Prophet[sa] wished to instill in his *ummah,* I pray to God Almighty to grant them blessings and bounties equal not merely to the value of this meal, but to the value of their intentions.

Although I have not had the opportunity to address Lajna Sialkot prior to this occasion, it is evident from some letters and statements of a respected and devoted worker of theirs, who is the wife of the president of this Jama'at, that they are outstanding workers and an example for many other Lajna. In fact, at times I have embarrassed the National Lajna by mentioning the work done by the Sialkot Lajna. Although there is no doubt that the nature of the National Lajna's work is different, I still believe that the steadfastness with which the Sialkot Lajna works, is an example for everyone.

By the Grace of God Almighty, I have a special interest in the education of women. Because of this, I have heard people's objections and their opposing points of view. Even then, I am fully convinced and stand firm on the point that no nation can progress without the education of women. When I took over the administration of Jama'at Ahmadiyya, only an elementary school existed for women in Qadian. However, I taught the Holy Qur'ān and Arabic to my wives and my daughters, and directed them to teach local women the translation of the Holy Qur'ān and *Hadith* etc. I trained one of my wives especially for this purpose and my intention was that her own educational progress should benefit other women, but it was God's Will that upon my return from touring England, she passed away.

I then realized that training only one woman was not feasible because it meant that if she died, it would take six to seven more years to train another one. Therefore, I arranged for female students to sit behind partitions to acquire education from [male] teachers. Objections were raised inside and outside of Qadian, questioning the value of an education where men taught women. Nevertheless, I paid no heed, as it is evidenced in the time of the Holy Prophet[sa] that men and women have taught each other in times of need.

During the era of the Holy Prophet[sa], Hazrat A'ishah[ra] herself taught his companions and new converts the sacred words of the Holy Prophet[sa]. Our women's honor [at this time] cannot be greater than the honor of those women, who lived at the time of the Holy Prophet[sa]. Therefore, the actions which are deemed appropriate for their status can in no way harm our [women's] status. I continued with this undertaking and last year, a good number of women qualified for the Maulvi exam, the equivalent to a FA degree in Arabic. In addition, I also expanded the elementary school to include a middle school. Likewise, taking the Arabic exam qualifies one to take the entrance [exam], therefore some of the women who had either passed the Maulvi exam or who had been formally teaching at the school, also passed the entrance [exam] by the Grace of God Almighty.

This year, we have established a college for women in Qadian.

In two years' time, I expect several of the women will pass the FA exam and, in this way, I intend that at the very least, fifteen-year-old girls should complete their BA and MA so that women can teach other women themselves. The requirements for establishing a men's college are strict, meaning that permission will not be granted until a specific amount of money is collected, and a building has been constructed. However, there are no such restrictions for a women's college. Therefore, at very little cost we can take advantage of many facilities in organizing this for them. Moreover, when they [the women] are ready to provide this education in Qadian, I am planning to establish a hostel so that arrangements can be made for women from out of town to stay there and receive the education.

How distressing it is that not a single Muslim women's college exists in Punjab! This college in Qadian is the first women's college and by the Grace of God Almighty, many women are receiving their education there. A few months ago, I went to Aligarh and I was told that only four girls took the entrance [exam], whereas in its very first year, sixteen girls took the exam in Qadian. We estimated that nearly one hundred percent of girls are receiving an education in Qadian; that is to say, their percentage is higher than the percentage of boys [who receive an education]. That the education of our Jama'at's women is increasing with such speed is a source of pleasure. *In Sha' Allah*, we will very soon overcome illiteracy among women, particularly in Qadian.

(*Misbah,* 18th October 1931)

Considering the line of work started by the Sialkot Lajna, I am hopeful that their efforts will increase the awareness of education here as well. I am very pleased to hear that due to their good manners, the Ahmadi ladies [of Sialkot] have gained such recognition among other social circles, that all their girls are attaining their education in the [Ahmadi] school without friction of any kind. This bears excellent testimony to the spirit of their work. If not men, at the very least women are developing the spirit of cooperation when undertaking Islamic projects, which is very gratifying. When the women develop this spirit, the men will be forced to combine their efforts.

At this time, I cannot talk for long for my health is not so good

and as we, who live in rural areas, are not accustomed to eating the substandard cooking oil used in the cities, I often come down with a sore throat after eating my very first meal in Lahore. However, this time the malady started after my third meal. Moreover, I am to deliver another speech later this evening. I will thus end my speech by briefly mentioning that oftentimes women feel they have no worth. This thought is completely baseless and should be dismissed from the heart as soon as possible. The Sialkot Lajna have proven that women work just as well.

Women should remember that men and women are equal in the sight of God Almighty and women can advance through the same levels of progress as men. The Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] said concerning one of his wives:

خُذُوْا نِصْفَ دِيْنِكُمْ مِنْ هذِهِ الْحُمَيْرَاءِ

Which meant learn half of the religion from Hazrat A'ishah[ra]. We have witnessed Hazrat A'ishah[ra] guide men in such important matters, that one is left amazed. She had attained perfection in understanding the sayings of the Holy Prophet[sa]. At times, men's intellect could not grasp what her own mind could comprehend.

There is a well-known anecdote that once there was a death in the Holy Prophet's[sa] family; perhaps it was Hazrat 'Ali's[ra] brother who had been martyred in battle. The women were greatly aggrieved, and they began to wail. Since wailing was forbidden, someone mentioned this to the Holy Prophet[sa]. The Holy Prophet[sa] told him to go and stop them. The man forbade them from continuing, yet they did not stop. At the time, Islam was in its initial stages, and the training of women was not yet complete. The man came back and told the Holy Prophet[sa] that they had not stopped. He said:

فَاحْثُ فِي أَفْوَاهِهِنَّ التُّرَابَ
[Cast dust in their faces]

In other words, put dirt on their faces. The man went and literally picked up dirt and began to throw it upon their mouths. When Hazrat

A'ishah[ra] was informed of this, she admonished him saying, "You are a man, but are you not wise enough to have understood the meaning behind what the Holy Prophet[sa] said? The Holy Prophet[sa] meant for you to leave them alone, not throw dirt upon them."

Hazrat A'ishah[ra] was a very intelligent woman. Similarly, Hazrat Fatimah[ra] was unmatched in her righteousness and piety, so much so that the Holy Prophet[sa] would share confidences with her. Other women were like them as well. Thus, women have the same means of progress as men, and I hope that no Ahmadi woman ever feels in her heart that there exists no opportunity for progress. Rather, their every step will move them forward and they will continue to work to increase the might and power of Muslims to infuse the world with the spirit of devotion, and to raise the standards of humanity in people in the same way we expect men to do so, or in the way our God Almighty expects us to do so. I pray that God Almighty gives them the ability to serve the Jama'at, religion and the Muslim world, and grant them all the success He has promised His Holy Prophet[sa], and that they become an example for other Jama'ats, *Amīn*.

(*Al Fazl*, September 29, 1931)

A Summary of the Address to the Ladies at Jalsa Salana

Delivered by Hazrat Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad Khalifat-ul-Masih II[ra]

December 1931

This speech was delivered to the ladies by Hazrat Khalifat-ul-Masih II[ra] at the Jalsa Salana in December 1931. Due to inexperience in taking notes, no woman could record the entire speech. Therefore, only portions of the speech are presented below.

Hazrat Khalifat-ul-Masih II[ra] said:

Last year, I instructed ladies to read the book *Kashti-e-Nuh* [Noah's Ark]. I would now like to question you. Could the sisters who have read or listened to *Kashti-e-Nuh* please stand up. (When the ladies stood up, Huzoor said), It appears that word has not truly spread throughout the Jama'at. However, to a certain extent, I hold Lajna Ima'illah responsible for not expressing more enthusiasm concerning this announcement.

The Qur'ānic Rukū' which I have just recited, I picked it at random when I opened the Holy Qur'an to recite. I read it without any set intention because I do not prepare a specific topic when I come to speak at the women's convention, as I know that ladies do not listen attentively.

God Almighty says, "I send down water from the clouds." Many women and men believe that the cloud is an animal, which drinks water from the ocean, but rain is the release of water vapor. There is no doubt that a cloud is comprised of polluted water, but it pours down after it is cleansed in the machine of God Almighty.

In the same manner, God Almighty has given each of you His blessings; your brain, your intellect, etc., which are cleansed through Allah's revelation and thus you are able to become pious. The way in

which a human accepts the water of God Almighty's revelation, is the manner of person they become. You can see that the water of Allah pours down the same for various plants, such as mustard, fruit, and potatoes. However, each plant adopts the effects [of the water] in their own way. In the same manner, by way of the word of God Almighty, whilst a believer flourishes in his faith, a non-believer grows in his disbelief, and a hypocrite increases in his hypocrisy.

Changing one's heart is one's own choice. The mercy of God Almighty is vast and infinite. Consider how it is the same Word of Allah which made Hazrat Abu Bakr[ra] '*Siddiq'* i.e., one who's each and every particle spoke the truth. On the one hand, he was an extremely tender-hearted person, but on the other hand, he grew so brave, that he told Hazrat 'Umar[ra], "I will not repeal any word of the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa]."[6]

In contrast, it was the Holy Qur'ān which also gave birth to Abu Jahal [father of the ignorant], who had been previously known as Abu al-Hikam [father of the wise]. Therefore, people can benefit from the Book of Allah according to their understanding, otherwise it is of no benefit.

Each one of you will benefit from my speech, according to your own understanding. God Almighty sends down the rain, but it is up to man to benefit from it. When you choose to accept the truth, then work diligently at it.

Consider this analogy: when you sew, does the needle do the work by itself? Similarly, *roti* cannot cook itself, even if flour, water, and fire are present. Unless you make the effort, will the *roti* bake itself? Of course not. In the same manner, God Almighty has sent

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[6] This is what Hazrat Abu Bakr[ra] said after being appointed as the *Khalifa* of the Holy Prophet[sa]. Before his demise the Holy Prophet[sa] had readied an army to fight the Byzantines under the leadership of Hazrat Usama bin Zaid[ra]. When the Holy Prophet passed away, it was recommended that the army no longer be sent as it was important to protect Medina. Hazrat Abu Bakr[ra] wisely and bravely rejected this proposal and said the quoted words. [Editor]

down His revelation. Now strive to learn and understand it, so that you may reap the benefits. Otherwise, nothing will come about. Learn religious knowledge. Do not believe yourself to be sinners whilst doubting how you will be granted the ability to learn religious knowledge. Know this, that if you are a great sinner, then God Almighty is the Greatest Forgiver and Most Merciful. Are you great or is Allah the Greatest of all? Ask for forgiveness, for God Almighty will certainly forgive you.

Likewise, the Holy Qur'ān instructs us to establish Salāt. It is far better for women to perform Salāt in congregation. By performing Salāt in congregation, thousands of blessings will be gained, and it is not appropriate to perform Salāt alone. If women are determined to follow this, it is neither difficult for them nor is it forbidden. Women can lead the prayer [among women only]. Congregational prayer is neither difficult nor dissimilar. The only difference is that seventy times more blessings will be gained, and in this way, they will make more progress in the areas of religion and spirituality.

Likewise, it is important to spend in the way of God Almighty. I cannot pass the chance to compliment the women of this community. Compared to other women, they have participated in the financial sacrifices with much more fervor. Our sisters are very brave in paying their *chandas*, however, to donate anonymously and secretly reaps many more blessings. In our country, it has become a custom to force donations or to make a demonstration of it.

An example of this would be the woman who burned down her home to show off her beautiful ring [see page 403]. Therefore, help the poor secretly and by doing so you will lose nothing and nor will God Almighty let your act go to waste, because He is the Master and King of both worlds.

The earlier prophets foretold of the Holy Qur'ān's prophecies and in a way, they envied us for this. Then how unfortunate it would be if you still failed to benefit from its revelation! If you do not follow its commandments, remember that the punishment for opposing it is grave indeed.

Women view themselves as weak, but that is nothing to be proud of. Men never complain of being tired, however women complain of their weakness and frailty after having simply walked to a train. Unfortunately, they pass this sentiment onto their daughters, which is not desirable.

Those who wish to make progress do not express their weakness. The more a person puts themselves through hardship the more they progress. Therefore, in order to progress in your faith and spirituality, put yourself through hardship. You will naturally then become accustomed to it. Muslims have lagged behind others, for they have never attempted to excel others.

Maulana Ishmael Shahid[rh] worked hard to hone his swimming skills in order to surpass others. Therefore, in the skills of sewing, education, teaching and lecturing you should surpass women of the other nations. Excel others in good deeds. Analyze yourselves to assess if you have this spirit within yourselves. Strive in order to excel other women. If you have given jewelry to charity, it is God Almighty's promise that you will receive gold and silver jewelry many times over.

There was a time when Muslims dominated the world, but now they have been disgraced. God Almighty has said that those who break divine laws will come to a miserable end. They end up as slaves. Rid yourself of laziness and obliviousness and inculcate courage and steadfastness within yourselves. If God Almighty has blessed you with children, may He also bless you with the ability to instill good moral training in them. I will also pray [for this].

Address to the Ladies at the Jalsa Salana

Delivered by Hazrat Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad Khalifat-ul-Masih II[ra]

1932

After reciting *Tashahhud* and *Surah Al-Fatihah*, Hazrat Khalifat-ul- Masih II[ra] said:

Just as nerves and arteries work together, the world is also organized and runs with the cooperation between men and women. However nowadays, a war rages all around and discord is on the rise. There is a prophecy which says that, near the Day of Judgment, all blessings will be effaced. The beasts i.e., the illiterate and lowly nations will be mixed together, their status will be raised, and all humans will desire equality.

It is for this reason that this section of the human race, women, came to the realization that they should seek equality. Therefore, women began to take part in war and conflict. There is a saying in our country that a cantaloupe, upon seeing another cantaloupe, takes on its color. This is also expressed as 'jumping on the bandwagon.' This quality and behavior is found in every country, but it is more rampant in our nation. Once a jackal was running and someone asked him where he was going. He replied that the King had ordered that all the camels in the city be captured. The person replied that the order was for camels, whereas you are a jackal. He replied that perhaps jackals could also be caught. In exactly the same manner, the women of our nation are imitating Hindu and Christian ladies and demanding their rights. Yet, who are men to grant women the rights, which God has already accorded them?

The way in which the Holy Qur'ān has defined a Muslim woman, it cannot be found in any other religious book or religion. Christianity teaches that women do not possess a soul. In other religions, women are described as the organ of the Devil or as the root

of all evil, etc. However, in Islam, wherever the Holy Qur'ān mentions pious men, it also mentions pious women. Hazrat A'ishah Siddiqah[ra] is not revered solely for being the wife of the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa], but also for being A'ishah[ra]. Christianity has not established any rights for women, not even for mothers because when it was mentioned to Hazrat Masih[as] that Mary had come to see him, he asked "Who is Mary? Go woman, I do not know you." Thus, where a mother's rights go unacknowledged, how can a wife's rights be established?

If Christians do not believe women have a soul, what rights can they accord them? Now, Muslim women strive to emulate them. It is a wise person's creed to never fall under another's influence. Islam has given women more than basic equal rights. For example, a woman's *mehr* is determined at the matrimonial ceremony and the *mehr* belongs solely to her and is under no one else's control. France is the most liberal country in all of Europe, and because women have been denied their rights, they have taken it upon themselves to fight for their rights. Due to sheer blindness, Muslim women have also demanded their rights, even though God has already given them these rights. God knows why they have suddenly begun asking for them.

Of course, they have not utilized the rights already granted them. Non-Muslim women were never awarded any rights, which is why they demand them. However, Allah Himself awarded Muslim women rights. The fact is, that they neither learned to exercise their rights nor did they understand how to utilize them.

Instead of fighting for and demanding your rights, learn to exercise the rights Islam has already given you. Raising an uproar after making a mistake is analogous to the following example. A highly skilled soldier, who was an excellent swordsman, worked for the King. The prince grew envious of the soldier, for the King was affectionate and kind to him and was forever awarding him accolades. The prince requested a fine sword from [the King]. The King ordered the soldier to give the prince a sword. The brave soldier warned the King that the prince was unfamiliar with the sword and could instead harm himself by improper use. Yet, the prince continued to insist and eventually the prince received his

sword, which resulted in him cutting his arm due to improper use of the sword. At this the King scolded him and the prince incurred his displeasure. Similarly, Muslim women are unaware of how to use their rights.

Consider how Islam instructs that even weaning a child off his mother's milk should be done after mutual consultation [i.e., women should not be forced to wean the child off from their mother's milk]. Islam says the *mehr* is the woman's property and they can use it as they wish. However, people began making the mistake of setting the *mehr* too high, i.e., a million rupees or even more. What is the purpose of setting a *mehr* at one or two hundred thousand rupees, if his [the husband's] income is not even a penny? He is then unable to pay it. This is not a matter of pride or display of wealth. People have created such grave problems for themselves by refusing to learn to correctly exercise their rights.

At any rate, Allah has bestowed Muslim women with all sorts of rights and now they must learn to use those rights correctly. If a person owns an excellent horse but does not know how to ride the horse, the horse is useless.

Along with the correct utilization, one requires a strong determination. Even if a person has knowledge and capability but has no determination, the ability is of no use. Some people are capable and knowledgeable, but they do not possess determination, therefore they are incapable of performing any work. Resolve should be firm and acted upon. When they resolve to do something, they should follow through. Some people have knowledge, capability, and strong determination, but they do not take any action. Their example is that of an old woman, who installed a door in her house but did not close it to keep the dogs out. The women of our country mistakenly believe that men have usurped their rights. Thus, Muslim women should remember that if they do not learn to implement the rights Islam has granted them, grievances are of no use.

If you want to learn about the rights given to you by Islam, study the Holy Qur'ān and the *Hadith*, and the proper interpretation can be found in the Promised Messiah's[as] books. Once Maulvi Abdul

Kareem[ra] addressed his wife harshly inducing the Divine revelation which stated:

یہ طریق اچھا نہیں اس سے روک دیا جائے مسلمانوں کے لیڈر عبدالکریم کو

"Advise the Leader of Muslims that this is unacceptable behavior."
[Urdu Tadhkirah p. 323]

Thus, learn lessons from the Promised Messiah's[as] practice and exemplary life. By following true Islam, his actions showed the great status Islam gives to women.

Undoubtedly, our country's elite leaders favor women's rights, such as Sir Sayed Ahmad Khan, who was a very good leader, but his own community criticized Islam. Other religions, such as Christianity, are already enemies of Islam and their mission is to criticize Islam. However, if our women learn their religion and read the Holy Qur'ān, they will be able to respond to allegations made by other religions. The Holy Qur'ān is the most complete book and by studying and pondering over it with full attention, one can gain the entirety of knowledge. From primary school to taking my entrance exams [for college], I was excused from taking exams due to my poor health. However, I studied the Holy Qur'ān. I did not study philosophy and logic, but by the Grace of Allah and by solely studying the Holy Qur'ān, I have always been comfortable in conversing with leaders of different religions, people of high status, and greatly esteemed orators and statesmen without any hesitation. No famous lecturer, principal, or bishop has had the courage to challenge me.

When I visited Europe, I could converse in English over various topics and meet with well-known philosophers without any reservations in my heart. This was not due to my superior mental capabilities, but because I wield the sword of the Holy Qur'ān. Therefore, if you study the Holy Qur'ān, *Hadith*, and the Ahmadiyya literature, you will also discover how exceptional the religion of Islam is. No Christian dares to face Ahmadis. You should wield the sword of the Holy Qur'ān. Reflect upon how no doctor is successful without

using his medicine and shiny tools. However, he also needs his mental capabilities. If he is not capable, then no number of tools or medicine can be of any use.

Some characteristics help develop capabilities. One is to be grateful. Gratitude generates many good morals and with gratitude comes the means to improvement and progress. The practice of being thankful generates unity and love in a nation. When you fulfill your obligation by thanking someone for their virtuous actions, it leads to the development of good morals.

Hazrat Junaid[rh] (or Shibli) was a respected elder, who had previously been the governor of a province. He was such a pious and righteous man that people named their children after him (for instance, our Qazi Ahmed's children's names are Junaid and Shibli). When he was a governor, the King awarded him a robe of honor for his excellent service. When he came before the King in his robe of honor, he suddenly sneezed and wiped his nose on that elegant robe. The King saw this and believed that he was dishonoring the robe. He ordered his servants to immediately confiscate his robe. They did so and then they proceeded to throw him out of the court, accusing him of failing to understand what it was to be thankful for the Royal honor bestowed to him. It is said that he had been a harsh and cruel governor, but after this incident he became a kindhearted, humble man of God. He knocked on the doors of everyone he had wronged and asked for their forgiveness for his shortcomings. He repented and immersed himself in the worship of Allah. This was all due to an incident concerning a robe. He realized that 'O my Lord! If one could be so greatly punished for dishonoring a robe, then not showing gratitude for all Thy blessings will certainly deserve punishment.' Consequently, after showing his gratitude, he became one of Allah's saints. Therefore, you should become more grateful. The Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] said that he observed more women in Hell, for they are [generally] ungrateful.

Moreover, women lack cooperation. This occurs not only in our country, but women in Europe are also not cooperative. In continuation of this subject, Hazrat Khalifat-ul-Masih II[ra] said: "When I went to Europe, a woman asked me, 'Do you have doors in your

country?' (In Europe, people often keep their doors closed). I answered, 'We do have doors, and they are also kept open.' The woman misunderstood me and believed me to be inferring that we were hospitable, while Europeans were not." Along with gratitude, you should show compassion for each other.

In addition, women should practice in themselves a great deal of patience, which they often lack. The capacity for patience can be developed through practice. It is extremely rare for women in our country to be patient, for they do not practice it and it is only acquired through hard work and courage.

Here, they begin to cry at the slightest hurt, but when you are at war with other nations, what good will crying do? The *Sahabiat* [female companions of the Holy Prophet[sa]] developed forbearance, endurance, and patience through practice. One *Sahabia*[ra] lost her father, son, and husband in war. She showed no concern for them but continued to ask after the Holy Prophet Muhammad's[sa] wellbeing. When she learned that the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] was alive and well, she said, "If the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] is alive, then I will not grieve." Likewise, when surrounded by enemies during a battle, a female companion removed the poles from a tent and fought so fiercely against the enemy that they fled. However, the women of our country begin to cry at the most minor of difficulties whilst also claiming that they are being patient. This so-called patience is no patience at all.

Once the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] was passing by and came upon a woman crying desperately. He asked her why she was crying in such a manner. He was told her child had died. He approached her and advised her to be patient. She replied that only he who had been stricken [with such grief], could understand her pain. She did not recognize the Holy Prophet[sa]. She said, "If you had lost a child, only then could you understand how painful it is." The Holy Prophet[sa] replied, "I have lost many children." After the Holy Prophet[sa] left, someone informed the woman that he was the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa]. The woman ran after the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] and said, "I did not recognize you. Please forgive me. I will be patient." The Holy Prophet[sa] replied, "What use is patience now? You

should have exercised patience before. Showing patience after crying so desperately is of no use." Therefore, if you practice patience as the *Sahabiat*[ra] did, only then will you be able to develop the ability to participate in your own country's affairs and utilize your rights. Otherwise, how can a person who does not show patience, forbearance, and tolerance in trivial matters, show courage in national matters. You will only achieve something if your mind is free of sadness and grief. Otherwise, verbal lamentations are of no use.

The next attribute is courage. Remember, courage enables humans to accomplish everything. If you have courage, you can act with bravery, otherwise you can achieve nothing. You could never accomplish with the help of your friends, that which you can accomplish with your own courage.

There is an incident related of a Kashmiri from a time when many Kashmiris joined the army. When the war was about to begin, the general commanded the army to guard a certain area. A few soldiers went to the officer and requested that he appoint some bodyguards to protect them. The officer realized these soldiers lacked courage and therefore, Kashmiris are no longer enlisted in the army. On the other hand, one wise king learned a lesson from an ant. He saw the ant fall several times while trying to climb up a wall. Finally, she succeeded, and the King learned a lesson from her. After losing several battles, he continued to strive, and he finally triumphed. This is courage and perseverance.

It is narrated that once, *Rustam*[7] was defeated by a wrestler and thrown onto the ground. Rustam was known for his courage and determination, and he thought to himself, 'Come courage. Let us gain our freedom.' As the opponent pushed him on his back and pressed down upon his throat, he gathered up his courage and loudly yelled out in order to frighten his opponent, "Here comes *Rustam*! Here comes *Rustam*!" Upon hearing *Rustam's* name, the opponent became frightened and ran away. By using the incitement of his own name,

[7] *Rustam*, a legendary hero in Persian mythology. He is best known for his tragic fight with Esfandiyār, the other legendary Iranian hero. *Rustam* was always represented as the mightiest of Iranian paladins (holy warriors). [Editor]

Rustam saved his life. So, without courage and strength, one remains unsuccessful.

Then there is humility and *tawazu'* [hospitality and respect due to one's humility]. In our country, *tawazu'* is a very common word, but few people know its meaning. If somebody serves his guest with good food, it is said he was served with great *tawazu'*. If a police officer visits a village, entertaining him is viewed as *tawazu'*. However, they do not understand the true meaning behind *tawazu'*.

It is said that once there was a King who would walk the streets in disguise. One day, he turned up at a point where a policeman was on guard. Out of arrogance and haughtiness, the policeman would not let the King pass, for he assumed the disguised King was an ordinary man. The policeman said, "Do you know who I am?" The King asked, "Sir, what is your rank? Are you a corporal?" The policeman replied, "Go higher". The King said, "A Sargent?" He replied, "Yes". Now, the policeman asked, "Who are you? A police inspector!" The King also replied, "Guess a little higher," to which the policeman asked, "A deputy?" The King once again replied, "Go higher." Further questions and answers ultimately resulted in him revealing that he was the King. The policeman was greatly embarrassed and apologized. Thus, some people do not understand what it is to show *tawazu'* and humility. Let someone acquire even the slightest worldly status and he swells with pride and arrogance. In their pride, they forget to keep their feet on the ground, and yet they do not realize that when great people show humility, they are respected and honored more so. Consider the Russian Czar's destruction and the German Kaiser's defeat, all the result of arrogance and conceit and lack of humility. However, [King] George the Fifth is highly respected. If one approaches the public with humility and *tawazu'*, they will gain a great deal more respect. The subjects of the Emperor value him for his actions of humility.

If people in authority show humility, they are greatly admired by the people who will wholeheartedly serve them with their lives. The nation's leader is their servant. While discussing the implementation of the foundations of Islam, the Promised Messiah[as] quoted the following Persian couplet:

"منہ کرسی زبہر ما کہ ما موریم خدمت را"

Do not appease me by placing me on a high pedestal,
for my mission is to serve.

There are many benefits to being humble and unpretentious. This is one way to improve the inner self and command respect from others.

Next, a most valuable trait is sacrifice. If you wish to take advantage of your rights, then make sacrifices. Sacrifice yourself, sacrifice your wealth, sacrifice your desires, and serve others. One who serves others is great. All the rest are insignificant.

Consider the following point. If a European princess serves others, if she visits the sick and the disabled in hospitals, gives them gifts, and asks after their wellbeing, she becomes highly respected. In this way, you are a member of the Promised Messiah's[as] Jama'at, who consider themselves to be servants of Islam. You should also make sacrifices in every aspect of life, so busy yourself in serving humanity, which will lead you to be successful in both the religious and in worldly life.

In the end, I would like to offer an important piece of advice, that unity requires organization and discipline. There is a complete lack of organization and discipline among women. This is a very important issue, and a concerted effort should be made to rectify this.

When alcohol was prohibited in Islam, the companions of Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] acted upon it immediately. Then there is the incident of when the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] sternly commanded everyone to sit down, and people sat down wherever his voice was heard. One of the companions, upon seeing another companion sitting in the middle of the street, asked him why he was sitting there. The companion replied that he heard the Holy Prophet Muhammad's[sa] command and had sat down in compliance with his order. [He went on to say], "I do not know why we have been asked to sit, but I will obey his command." Therefore, you should also learn this important and very necessary concept, that to achieve organization and discipline, you must listen and obey every command.

After this, I would like to give the ladies two important tasks. They should consider them and then report back to me with the results, so that we may implement this in our whole community.

First and foremost is the question of *burqa* and *purdah.* The previous version of *burqa* was useless when considering *purdah* in accordance with *Shariah*. Along with *purdah*, women also need fresh air for their health, which cannot be enjoyed when wearing the previous style, nor can one hold a child. If it flaps open with the wind or if one must lift something, only the back remains covered, while one's front part of the dress is revealed. Some do not like the new style of *burqa* as it reveals beauty and charm. Therefore, they believe it to be useless and a *chador* is also inconvenient.

This is why I am requesting talented women and expert seamstresses to come up with a *burqa* which is comfortable from the point of health, and is in accordance with Islamic requirements, and then pass it onto us. I do not know how to sew, and women are more in tune regarding this matter. It is my hope that they will ponder over this and let us know, so we can review and implement it.

The second matter concerns the women's exhibition, concerning arts and handicrafts. A sample of every type of product crafted in your town, should be brought to be exhibited at headquarters. The present exhibition appears to be of the Lajna themselves, rather than the products. Ladies should direct their attention to this matter and arrange to send the highest quality product in their hometown. Or inform me, so I can make arrangements towards this. I will show the Lajna how an exhibition is done. After attempting to do so in the last two to three years, I have observed that they have not accomplished anything. Therefore, women should strive in this regard. They have been assigned these two responsibilities, and I hope that you will have accomplished them by next year.

Lastly, I pray that may God Almighty help you with these blessed tasks.

(*Misbah*, January 15, 1933)

Obtain True Knowledge!

Address to the Ladies at Jalsa Salana
Delivered by Hazrat Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad, Khalifat-ul-Masih II[ra]

1933

After reciting the *Tashahhud* and *Surah Al-Fatihah*, Hazrat Khalifat-ul- Masih II[ra] said:

As Sayyeda Fazeelat Begum has a loud voice, she should make an announcement on all four sides of the stage that I cannot speak loudly, for just yesterday I got out of bed after battling a bout of influenza. It will be better if the audience listens quietly. If those who cannot hear me sit quietly during the speech, they will at the very least attain blessings.

(Upon this, Sayyeda Fazeelat Begum announced his message on all sides of the stage.)

After this, Hazrat Khalifat-ul-Masih II[ra] said:

Those who have passed throughout the ages, be they men or women, beautified themselves to show their high status or distinction. If nothing else, they decorated their bodies with s*urma* [dark pigment used as makeup] or they built grand buildings to express their beauty and grandeur. This was the standard by which their high rank and stature was measured. Therefore, cities such as Delhi, Baghdad and Cordoba have had and still have a large number of architectural marvels. Some believe that beauty lies in singing and playing music. In some countries, stylish and beautiful clothes are favored. In India, some people would wear shalwars [loose pants] made from forty to fifty yards of fabric. In India, there was a period of time when outfits were donned with pride and the current style of shalwars and pajamas [fitted ruched pants] were considered inferior. Over time, fashion has changed considerably. In any case, every age brings a new standard to mark high status.

These days, it has become fashionable in our country to attain a higher education and obtain a degree. I believe that today's parents long for their daughters to attain a higher education even more than Alexander or Timur yearned to conquer other nations. Copying and following English society has become a fashion, which has developed into a craze. In our country, more girls are obtaining degrees in an effort to mimic other countries, which has also become a fad. Initially, the trend was to be ignorant and now the trend is to obtain this type of education, although this is also a form of ignorance.

Other nations regard the English as fanatical for seeking knowledge. These nations are wrong. The English do not learn to rid themselves of ignorance, but rather they acquire knowledge which is necessary and useful for the country. Perhaps our country is mimicking the British method of learning, but to its own detriment. Chaudhry Zafrullah Khan[ra] just related to us the story of a man, who sent his son to a college in Europe to attain a higher education on the condition that he would have to support himself while attaining his degree, for the father could not afford to do so. Thus, this was a good example, for his money was not wasted and the boy was taught to rely on his own ability.

These days, women are developing an eagerness to attain a degree. They believe that unless they attain an educational degree, they will not be considered sophisticated. This is a sign of their ignorance. I plan to advise the ladies of our community to gain knowledge, while also guiding them on how much and what type of education they should obtain.

God Almighty has blessed every human being with one favor or another. Some are blessed with a good voice, whereas others write well. No doubt, writing is an excellent skill. A person can impact others through [writing] from thousands of miles away and this is one of the best ways to express oneself.

I will give the ladies a simple example. In the beginning, sewing was done with a needle, but now sewing machines are used. The meaning of knowledge is to broaden your faculties and obtain items of comfort to fulfill your needs; to take advantage of good things

and make them beneficial for your nation and religion.

Knowledge is of two types: the science of religion, which benefits religion, and the science of bodies, which benefits the body. These two [categories] are labelled sciences and do not come under any other category. For example, a woman spends her life learning mathematics, but forsakes the responsibilities of rearing her children and household duties. Who would say she is intelligent and seeks knowledge? Men are required to acquire this type of knowledge, as they are to earn a living, but why is it necessary for women to solve mathematical problems? This is not knowledge, but ignorance.

The duty of a woman is to manage the household and raise children. However, people are in the habit of viewing the grass as greener on the other side. It is for this reason, in order to mimic the European women, that our Muslim society looks to their daughters to acquire educational degrees. In fact, a woman is the queen of her domestic empire and is an officer of a military department, where she must raise her children.

Women believe that the man's job is more comfortable and honorable and studying in colleges and acquiring degrees is an easy task, a source of much honor. However, if women take over the work of men and men the work of women, it would be disgraceful. There was a period when the poets of Lucknow began to write and recite poetry in a feminine style and adopted a feminine conversational tone. However, when the King of Awadh adopted this feminine style of expression, he lost his kingdom.

The Muslim children within India are spoiled, because the mothers are incompetent and do not know how to train them. When I went to Europe, I met an educated Indian person, who had adopted European culture so entirely, that he could not speak even a single word of his Indian language. This is the result of gaining degrees. In a way he had completely detached himself from India. In our country, if a person gains the slightest affluence, he believes himself to be different from the rest. In England, this is not the case, for they gain benefit from their knowledge, rather than causing harm to their nation by severing all ties with it, thus depriving it of the benefit [of their

knowledge].

In fact, look at our stage here. Priding themselves as being either the wife of a judge, or the mother of a barrister, or the wife of a deputy, some women expect to be seated at a higher position than others. Nevertheless, they should have ensured that their sisters who work as the Lajna president, secretary, or national volunteer, were seated here on stage.

In this world, respect is not earned by money. A person cannot become great by finding wealth, nor can a person gain respect by wearing an expensive outfit or costly jewelry. However, real knowledge instills dignity in a person and an educated person deserves complete respect. In fallen nations, undoubtedly value is given to those who wear expensive clothes, but that is not the case with the pious. It is narrated that once Hazrat Sheikh Sa'adi attended a princely banquet, where he was not given any respect, as it was his practice to dress modestly. The next day, he wore expensive clothes and was seated at a more prominent position. When the food was served, he began to feed his clothes. When people asked what he was doing, he explained that it was not him, but his dress which had been thus honored.

Among the British elite, not one person courts these English judges and governors, who hold such prominent positions here in India. Once, when a photograph was taken, a British financial commissioner was requested to stand behind the late Hafiz Roshan Ali, although when he was in India, he had been powerful and highly respected due to his substantial income. People respect those who have more wealth, even though this is wrong, for wealth does not produce respect. At any rate, our Jama'at has not yet received worldly respect, for what is respect? Remember that true respect comes from spirituality, piety, righteousness, and purity. Progress comes from good deeds. Respect is obtained through service. You should gain religious knowledge, which will benefit the nation and community. How many of you serve the religion and perform *tabligh* of Islam?

Thus, listen to the words of God and His prophet and read Hazrat Sahib's [The Promised Messiah[as]] books. There is plenty of time to read novels and magazines, but is there no time to read

religious books? How shameful to see English converts seek to learn Urdu to read the Promised Messiah[as]'s books, while our ladies refuse to learn Urdu. If they can read a small amount, they begin to read novels. Seek to gain knowledge of religion; read the Holy Qur'ān and read the *Hadith*. Knowledge and wisdom can be found within the Promised Messiah's[as] books, therefore derive beneficial knowledge from them. Obtaining a bachelor's or master's degree offers no benefit to religion.

Last year, a girl who was working towards her BA degree, was requested to do *tabligh* to her peers regarding the teachings of Ahmadiyyat. She replied that she did not wish to create conflict among her peers. Yet she was no intellectual, rather she was ignorant. What benefit did she gain from such an education? If education means to learn something, are not ironsmiths or carpenters knowledgeable in their field? The meaning of education is to learn that which captures your interest. Those fields which fulfill your needs are called education. A person with a BA degree was not recruited in the armed forces, for he was unskilled in the martial arts nor was he knowledgeable of army tactics. Would you call a physician competent simply because he might be knowledgeable concerning music [a skill unrelated to his field]?

Therefore, we must evaluate what type of knowledge is required. We are in need of religious knowledge. If a woman succeeds in earning her master's degree but is incompetent in raising her children or managing a household, she is not knowledgeable but ignorant. The first responsibility of a mother is training her children and then running a household. One who reads *Hadith* and the Holy Qur'ān is a pious Muslim woman. If a woman excels in reading books to become a teacher or a physician, it is very beneficial because we need such professions. All other sciences are in vain.

I ask the question, what will you do with a bachelor's or master's degree? I advise the ladies of the community to learn religion and attain spiritual knowledge. Hazrat Rabi'ah Basri[rh] or Hazrat A'ishah Siddiqah[ra] had no educational degrees. Hazrat A'ishah[ra] learned religion and she is the master of half of religious knowledge. When we need a *Hadith* dealing with the issue of

prophethood, we refer to Hazrat A'ishah[ra] for its elucidation.

Sher Muhammad was an uneducated carriage man, but he was exceptional at performing *tabligh*. When he would drive his buggy, he would hold the Promised Messiah's[as] book in his hand and ask his passengers to read it to him. In this way, he could do *tabligh*. Hence, when an illiterate, uneducated man knows that which serves a greater purpose, he is knowledgeable and not ignorant. The Promised Messiah[as] used to say that the secret to progressing in serving one's religion is knowledge. A person becomes rich not due to pride or money, but from true knowledge.

Now I pray that God Almighty may grant you the ability to attain true knowledge and that you do obtain true knowledge.

(*Misbah*, January 15, 1934)

Address to the Ladies at Jalsa Salana

Delivered by Hazrat Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad, Khalifat-ul-Masih II[ra]

1934

After reciting *Tashahhud* and *Surah Al-Fatihah,* Hazrat Khalifat-ul- Masih II[ra] said:

In our country, and in fact in all other nations, there is a widespread notion that women are naturally and inherently incapable of accomplishing anything significant. In order to prove this notion incorrect, women should have accomplished great things, rather than acceding to it.

Are they truly incapable of accomplishing anything great? And is it largely due to the Holy Prophet[sa] stating in a *Hadith* that he saw a large number of women in hell because they were ungrateful, deficient in understanding, and imperfect in their faith? The Holy Prophet[as] related this to us to make women aware of their condition and warn them that these shortcomings could lead them to hell. Ingratitude is not an innate quality. It is an [acquired] habit. If a thief steals, it is not because stealing is in his nature, but because he has acquired the habit of doing so. If women have acquired the habit of being ungrateful, it can be altered. However, instead of instructing women to rid themselves of this bad habit, today's ignorant maulvis tell them it is women's nature [to be ungrateful] and they cannot change themselves. The women readily agree to this consensus.

Thus, when the doctor does not prescribe treatment and the patient is content, then death is the surest outcome. Whereas, by pointing out that women will go to hell for being ungrateful, being inadequate in their faith, and weak in understanding, the Holy Prophet[sa] challenged their sense of honor and urged them to give up such habits and thereby enter paradise. Just as he[sa] once lightheartedly mentioned to his wet-nurse that old people would not enter paradise.

This upset her a great deal, but he[sa] reassured her that youth would be restored to everyone before entering paradise.

Consequently, the Holy Prophet[sa] intended that women should give up ingratitude and increase their understanding. It is generally observed in children that at an early age, they have a poor understanding which improves with age. So now, when women are told they are deficient in understanding or in faith, are they to give up on their intelligence or faith? No, certainly not! Simply because you are weak in faith, does not mean that you should give up your faith and sit on the side, but rather that you should learn faith.

We observe that when children begin their schooling, they know nothing, but they learn and grow in knowledge. Should they quit at the beginning because they cannot read? In short, this was an admonition to abstain from ingratitude.

Consider how great the favor is of the Holy Prophet[sa] towards women that before his advent women were treated as animals and were called every derogatory name. In fact, even now, several nations believe that women do not have a soul. Thus, how gracious was the Holy Prophet[sa] when he dictated that women and men are equal in humanity. We have observed that in some cases women are religious and men are weak in faith, women are wise and men are dull. In response to the Holy Prophet's[sa] great favor, it was the women's responsibility to engage in the propagation of Islam as an expression of gratitude.

However, the fault lies wholly with present day maulvis who persuaded women that their mind and intellect was too weak to accomplish anything. Whereas on the other hand, the Holy Prophet[sa] was challenging women's sense of honor by pointing out that how can they enter paradise without committing virtuous deeds? He pointed out that they fail to become intellectual and serve the faith. To acquire intellect, you need to work and in order to work you need to learn the skills to work. The fault lies with the maulvis for teaching the opposite. Today, I have explained to you the truth about this *Hadith*, so that you may understand that this is what is meant by it.

Following this advice, which was the prelude to my speech, I wish to tell you that this is a wonderful time to serve Islam. The maulvis wiped away half of the body of Islam by alleging that women are deficient in understanding and are incapable of accomplishing anything. The maulvis have inculcated such concepts among Muslims, which have made them believe that even the prophets are not free from the touch of Satan. Therefore, in one way or another, they have defamed all prophets. However, the Promised Messiah[as] presented the true picture of Islam. Maulvis have propagated the false notion that the Holy Qur'ān speaks of many such things which would be inappropriate to accept as true. If I begin telling you each one, you would be astonished. Remember, true Islam is that which the Promised Messiah[as] has presented, which is Ahmadiyyat. Thus, if at this time Ahmadiyyat is in danger, it means Islam is in danger.

The Islam presented by the maulvis is in no way acceptable. They present Islamic teachings to non-Muslims in a negative manner. For example, they claim that if you come upon a non-Muslim traveler, it is permissible to steal his wealth or that it is lawful for you to take the wife of a non-Muslim without marrying her. Who would accept this version of Islam? These scholars go on to assert that true Islam is *Jihad*, according to which it is permissible to kill a Hindu, Christian or Sikh and to take their assets.

Hazrat Khalifat-ul-Masih I[ra] related that once he went to Amritsar [a city in India] and gave a man four *aaney* [coins] to purchase some sweets. When the man came back with the sweets, he also handed him [Hazrat Khalifat-ul-Masih I[ra]] back the full amount of money. Upon questioning him as to how he had returned with both the sweets and money in hand the man replied that it was *Mal-e-Ghanimat* [spoils from the war]. He had asked the shopkeeper to show him something from the backroom and when the shopkeeper went to the back, he quickly picked up the eight *aaney*. Hazrat Khalifat-ul-Masih[ra] said, "You have stolen the money." He defended himself by saying that the shopkeeper was a Hindu, not a Muslim.

Thus, it is the Promised Messiah's[as] great favor upon us, that he presented us with the true teachings of Islam. If Islam was

presented as a teaching which permits either the killing of or stealing from anyone who is a Hindu, Sikh or Christian, would any person accept such an Islam? No one would ever do so!

And it is on this basis, they say that the Promised Messiah[as] has abrogated *Jihad* [fighting against an enemy]. These days, maulvis have gathered together to proclaim that since Islam enjoins *Jihad* and these people [Ahmadis] are opposed to it, their Jama'at should be destroyed for having broken the sword of Islam. Why are they so bent upon destroying and persecuting Jama'at Ahmadiyya? It is because the Promised Messiah[as] has done away with oppression and dishonesty.

The people of Kabul killed Hazrat Sahibzada Abdul Latif[ra] because he spoke against killing the British. Likewise, there was another man who became the only Ahmadi in his family, and his father and relatives beat him before every meal, as regularly as one eats curry for food. He was beaten every day in this manner. Once his father entered while his brothers were beating him, and when he screamed, "I am dying," the father felt pity in his heart and asked the sons to leave him alone. This situation continued for two years, solely because his family was angry at him for converting to Ahmadiyyat.

Similarly, there was a businessman from Narrowal [a city in India] who suffered greatly after accepting Ahmadiyyat. You are already aware of the situation in Kabul and what has passed there. Besides that, when some Ahmadis from Lahore and other cities went to perform *tabligh,* hundreds of people pursued them, and dogs were set upon them. Some of the women who accepted Ahmadiyyat or who inadvertently married non-Ahmadis write to me that they are called names and are persecuted. Non-Ahmadis create problems for their Ahmadi colleagues in offices and refuse to give them leave of absence to attend Jalsa, or they even dismiss them from their jobs. Additionally, educated Ahmadi candidates are denied jobs, simply on the basis of them being Ahmadi. Then there have been some Ahmadi men who were boycotted by their wives and children and they suffered greatly for many years until the wife accepted Ahmadiyyat. Moreover, they misinform authorities that we are anti-government,

while on the other hand they tell the public that we are government agents, thereby turning the government against us and inciting people to attack us and destroy our possessions. In their mosques, they declare that Ahmadis are pigs and should be refused entry into their mosques. They make proposals to declare our marriages null and void.

In short, our condition is similar to that of the Muslims during the time of the Holy Prophet[sa]. Despite the vastness of the earth, it has narrowed for us. Recently, gatherings were organized in Qadian where they hurled obscenities at us, and some government officials sided with them. On the one hand they incite the government against us, and on the other they mislead the public.

However, let our enemies remember that they shall fail. Let the wife part ways with her family, let the husband desert his family. However, Ahmadiyyat will not be forsaken. Recently, an incident occurred, where a child turned up [at one of our offices]. His parents had subjected him to several hardships and had even stripped him of his clothes. Our Jama'at clothed him and brought him here. Thus, those who are destined to come to us, they will most certainly do so, and they will not care for the consequences. The boy whom God had decreed to come to us, was even stripped of his clothes and yet he still came. So who then can stop the one whom God brings to us?

No one can eliminate faith by striking at it with a sword or by stoning it. We are all aware of the situation in Kabul, as well as the circumstances Sahibzada Abdul Latif[ra] and Ne'matullah Khan Shaheed[ra] endured, whereby they were forced to walk around the bazaars. Some [Ahmadis] from among them had their noses pierced and were told to give up Ahmadiyyat, but they did not.

When Sahibzada Abdul Latif[ra] was brought to the execution grounds, the King told him that there was still time to denounce Ahmadiyyat. The mullahs threw stones at him. His disciples cried when they saw his handcuffs, but he said, "These are golden bracelets." An Indian trader, who has since accepted Ahmadiyyat,

was also present there and said that he too threw stones at him. He [Sahibzadah Sahib[ra]] lay there bleeding but continued to say, "My people do not know what they do." People leapt at him as if they were the hunting dogs. They crushed his bones with stones, yet he raised his hands and continued to supplicate [to God].

This was the faith of an Ahmadi! Therefore, faith cannot be eliminated by anyone's efforts to diminish it. Whether it be the government, the public, the rich, or the mullahs. They may kill us, but they cannot corrupt our faith. Therefore, it is the duty of not only our men, but of our women as well, to prepare themselves to make sacrifices for the Jama'at. There are examples of not only one but hundreds of people, who suffered greatly for the Jama'at, until God granted them death.

Thus, it is your duty to stand shoulder-to-shoulder with men. If you love your faith, then abide by the scheme I have proposed during these trial-filled times. Think about this: if a mother stays awake all night for her child, does she do so as a favor to anyone? Therefore, if you love your faith, then bear every form of pain for its sake.

I cannot reveal all that which is currently undisclosed because it is not appropriate for a general to reveal all the secrets to his soldiers. I had appealed for twenty-seven thousand five hundred rupees, but we cannot contend with money alone. Among our enemies are many wealthy people, who can donate sixty thousand rupees at one time. There are many millionaires among the businessmen in Bombay [Mumbai]. We cannot compete with them even if we were to raise ten million.

Sacrifice for your Faith - Simple living

The real responsibility of every Ahmadi man and woman is to make sacrifices, therefore every man and woman must live a simple life. We are unaware of what kind of sacrifices may be required from us. The Holy Qur'ān clearly states that we should neither spend our

wealth extravagantly nor hoard it in a miserly fashion. If we are in the habit of spending all that we have, then when it becomes necessary to give in the way of our religion, we will have nothing to give. Therefore, I advise you to live a simple life and make a habit of hard work.

How will those people who are accustomed to eating good food or whose houses are full of things, be able to migrate (if there be a need to migrate or if someone needs to go and live in another place to serve the faith)?

During the time of the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa], there was an occasion when people were required to set out for an expedition. Twenty thousand accompanied him, while three did not. These three were well-off and believed that because they had their own transport, they could catch up later, so they did not leave [with others] due to their pride over their wealth. It was customary of the Holy Prophet[sa] to make stops along the route when he travelled. However, this time he did not stop near the city and continued. When the three left their homes to follow, they could not find him [the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa]]. The route was dangerous, and at last they were compelled to return to their homes. God Almighty did not approve of this action of theirs and they were given a punishment lasting fifty days, during which no one was allowed to talk to them. Servants, wives, children, and other Muslims were not allowed to speak to them. One of the [three] men sent his wife to her mother's home so that he would not speak to her by mistake. Another of the three was very talkative. He said, "I would speak to everyone, but no one would respond. One day, I visited my cousin who was sitting in his garden and said to him, 'We have shared together our times of eating and resting, and I have shared my secrets with you. Do you believe me to be a *munafiq* [hypocrite]?' My intention was for him to tell me whether he believed me to be a believer or a hypocrite, but he did not reply. He simply raised his face up to the sky and said, 'Only Allah and His Prophet know best.'"

"When the truth of the situation was revealed, I wished that the earth would open and swallow me. Everything went dark before my eyes, and I could not even see the gate from which to exit the garden. I

was forced to jump the walls of the garden to leave. I was walking through the market when I saw a man pointing at me and telling another man, 'He is the one.' He gave me a letter from a King, in which it was written that as the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] did not care for my dignity, I should join them. At that point, I realized that this was Satan, who was trying to deceive me. I asked the man to follow me. On the way, I passed by a baker's oven, threw the letter in the fire, and told the man to tell his King that I had given my reply. I visited the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] daily and offered my *salaam* [greetings of peace]. I would look at his face to gauge whether he had replied to my *salaam* in a low voice. I would then leave, but come back again to offer my *salaam*, in case the Holy Prophet[sa] had not heard me the first time. I would look at his lips, hoping his lips would move [in reply] and answer me in a soft voice. Despite the vastness of the earth, it had become narrow for us."

"The morning when the commandment for our forgiveness was revealed, many people rushed to break the news. One clever person scaled a roof top and shouted, 'O my Malik! God has forgiven your offence.' (I am narrating this incident to you to illustrate that wealth can become an obstacle. Note how the poor left [with the Holy Prophet[sa]], but wealth became a barrier for the rich). I gave a suit [of clothing] to the first man who delivered me the news, saying that this is all I have. Since my wealth came in the way of my faith, I have decided to give the rest of my wealth, garden, and land to the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa]. Thus, this suit of clothing comprises of the entirety of my wealth, which I now give to you."

Learn a lesson from this historical incident and pledge to adopt simplicity in eating and drinking. Make only one dish for the meal. Many of the wives of farming families cook several dishes of vegetables. Every Ahmadi woman and child should promise to keep their dress simple. Make fewer outfits compared to earlier and do not spend any money on accessories for your clothes. It is not forbidden to keep what you have already. Doctors should prescribe such remedies which are less costly. Do not go to see plays or other entertainment. Do not give any money or give only a small amount of money as gifts at weddings. In keeping up with custom and fashion, do not spend a great deal of money on the decorations of your homes, except if you

need to repair or replace a broken piece. Many of these instructions are for the rich, but some are for the middle classes, and some are for the poor as well.

Use your savings to buy properties. With this scheme, poor women will also be able to participate in purchasing a property. Village women can come together and contribute two rupees each to buy a property worth two hundred rupees and then rent it and share the income equally among them. In this way, poor women can contribute when the need for *chanda* arises. If every individual begins to save what they have and buy property, then in a brief time, a great many things can be built. When your financial state strengthens, you will find many opportunities to serve the Jama'at. If women convert jewelry worth a thousand rupees into property, at the very least, they can earn a monthly income of five rupees. However, this is not an order, lest the weak are tested, for the Promised Messiah[as] has said that women love their jewelry more than they love their relatives. Many of you have jewelry, but you do not pay the Zakat. In this way, you can save yourself from the punishment of not paying the Zakat. And if you possess jewelry, you must pay Zakat on it. If you buy property with your jewelry, you can generate a monthly income. You shall be able to spend with ease and spend in the way of religion as well. You can buy property by coming together.

Wherever it is established, Lajna should make an effort. Where there is no Lajna, it should be established. Village women should take out an hour or two from their day to make baskets etc., and thus earn at least one or two coins. Skilled women can earn twenty to thirty rupees per month. However, since I have instructed against excessive decorations, you should make simple goods, such as ornamental hair ties or long skirts. I propose that starting from February 1936, an exhibition should be held from now on. Women from all over should send items and these items can be sold in that exhibition. The exhibition should be held in Lahore and women from all over should attend. Women from Hyderabad, Deccan, Bengal, UP, Sarhad, Punjab should all attend.

These days, when there is so much opposition against us, women can help by performing *tabligh* to other women. Women from

Kasur, Amritsar, Ferozepur, and Gujranwala and from every other district should participate in this exhibition and conference. The lecturers should be properly trained, and I will appoint men to assist you in this regard. Through this, women will have the opportunity to take part in *tabligh*. Gradually, centers for *tabligh* will be established in other cities, such as Lahore, Amritsar, Sialkot, etc., so that women in other areas can perform *tabligh*.

Now I have assigned you your work and you can no longer complain that you were not given a chance to serve. Adopt simplicity in your lives and also take part in *tabligh*. If even now you make excuses, it would not be appropriate. I pray to God Almighty that in the future, He enables our men, women, and children to serve Islam. You should strive, so that when the enemies see your efforts, they join you. Now, there is no room for excuses. Each person has been given their responsibility and if you show indolence, you will be answerable to God. May God Almighty enable you and I to follow the path which pleases Him, *Amīn*.

(*Misbah*, January 15, 1935)

Hazrat Khalifat-ul-Masih II's[ra] Instructions Regarding the Moral Training of Children

Delivered by Hazrat Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad, Khalifat-ul-Masih II[ra]

December 27, 1925

Hazrat Khalifat-ul-Masih II[ra] addressed the topic of moral training of children at the 1925 Jalsa Salana. Hazrat Khalifat-ul-Masih II[ra] said that if children are raised according to Islamic teachings from the very beginning, they will grow up to be free of sin and develop good morals. Since this is a highly important and essential matter, every woman in Jama'at-e-Ahmadiyya should keep it at the forefront of her mind. Therefore, some of these instructions are presented below:

Hazrat Khalifat-ul-Masih II[ra] said:

Contrary to other religions, Islam has not only drawn our attention towards the methods of eradicating sin but has also stressed upon how we should strive to prevent it from taking root in the first place. I say with regret, that while the Holy Qur'ān has highlighted this point and some Muslim scholars have also emphasized this, Muslims as a nation, have not paid full attention to it and have ignored the fact that sin takes root even before the age of puberty.

When people say a person has begun to fall into sin, the truth is that the seed of sin which had been planted within him, that seed has in fact now grown into a tree and has become visible to us. Otherwise, how could a tree grow where there is no seed? It cannot. If a person had no prior ability to commit sin, from whence did the ability emerge when he was grown?

The reality is that sin develops in childhood and settles inside the heart before the onset of puberty and at times, the origin of some sin may even be in place before birth. By the time a person is grown, and the religious scholars tell you to save him from evil, he is already under the complete control of Satan. By this, I do not mean that he has

taken on all sin, but that he has developed the capability and inclination towards sin and is easily lured towards it.

As I have told you before, morals are based on some predispositions. If these dispositions are corrupted during childhood, the person becomes fully equipped to commit a sin, even though he was born completely free of sin.

You should ponder over where sin comes from. Is sin not inherited? Nations who have certain characteristics tend to pass on similar characteristics to their children. If a nation has lacked bravery for generations and you are encouraging them to be brave, they will still show cowardliness when fighting, or they will not fight with the same courage that a nation would which is known for its bravery. Although you could train and reform them in these matters, one's heritage does play some role.

Similarly, sin is borne from an excess of greed, anger, fear, love, and desires. If you reflect, are these dispositions not cultivated right from childhood? Are these small, harmless habits not the foundation of future sin? Parents say about their child that, 'He is only a child, so of course he will behave in this manner.' However, is it not true that childhood is the time when the deepest imprints take hold? Why would a person steal, if in childhood he had been taught to control himself?

[Take the example of] a person who embarks upon *Jihad* but then he runs away from the battle due to the fear of the enemy. People taunt him for doing so, however think about this carefully. Was it not those childhood stories of cowardliness, told by his mother, which brought him running back in fear? The same goes for anger. During childhood, parents ignore this and when the child grows up, he goes about fighting with everyone.

Again, is sin not bred due to the lack of will power? Is this weakness created without any reason? After all, why does a human being spend his entire life making resolutions only to break them, therefore achieving nothing? Lack of will power does not develop in one day; rather, it is developed in childhood and only in childhood.

Otherwise, why would a person, who earnestly wishes to rid himself of a bad habit, not succeed in doing so? Had he been properly trained, that would have been sufficient to convince him that such a habit is wrong, and he would have immediately quit. Or, if such a habit is good, he would have adopted it straightaway.

Now, I will tell you how to safeguard your children from developing this weakness. The first door of sin is opened by the sway of the parent's thoughts, rooted within their hearts, before their child is even born. It is important to close this door first. Thus, people should show mercy to their children and purify their thoughts. If they are unable to succeed in this the whole time, they should at least follow the solution given by Islam to protect their children to a certain extent. Islam has prescribed a cure for inherited sin. When the husband and wife come together, they should recite this prayer:

اَللّٰهُمَّ جَنِّبْنَا الشَّيْطٰنَ وَجَنِّبِ الشَّيْطٰنَ مَا رَزَقْتَنَا

[O Allah! Keep us away from Satan and keep Satan away from the children you will bestow us.]

O Lord! Protect us from Satan and protect from Satan the children You have provided us. This is not a charm or magic spell, and it is not necessary that you say it in Arabic. You could say it in your own language, 'O Allah! Sin is harmful. Protect us from sin and protect our child from sin.' The intention or thought made at that time, will stand as a wall between Satan and the child. The Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] said if this prayer is said at the time [of conception], the child is born free of satanic influences.

Some people raise the question that although they recited this prayer several times, it did not show the specified result. The answer to their doubt is that firstly, they did not recite the prayer as it should have been recited but said it as a charm. Secondly, by no means is this a solution for all sin. It is only for such sins as are hereditary. After inherited sin, the person's thoughts regarding sin start to become tainted in childhood. Islam has resolved this problem in the following way. The Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] told us that moral training begins at birth and I believe that if it were possible the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] would have said to start while the child was still in the

womb. However, since this is not possible, he[sa] said to start right after birth by calling the *Adhān* in his ear. The words of *Adhān* are not said as a charm or spell, but the purpose of this command is to cause parents to understand that the time for their child's moral training has begun.

In addition to the *Adhān*, the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] has commanded that children be taught good manners right from childhood. He[sa] substantiated this command by teaching manners to his own relatives during their childhood. It is narrated in the *Hadith*, that when Hazrat *Imam* Hassan[ra] was a small child and was eating, the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] said to him:

وَكُلْ بِيَمِينِكَ، وَكُلْ مِمَّا يَلِيكَ

Eat with your right hand and eat from that which is in front of you.

Hazrat *Imam* Hassan[ra] was only two and a half years old at the time. In our country, if a child moves his hand all over the plate, fills his mouth with too much food, and even soils the clothes of those sitting around him, his parents laugh and do not fret over this. Or they reprimand him very lightheartedly, the intention of which is not to teach their child, but simply to show off that they care.

Another incident narrated in the *Hadith* is that once Hazrat *Imam* Hassan[ra] picked a date from among the dates allocated to charity and put it in his mouth. The Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] inserted a finger in his mouth and removed it. The significance of this was to teach that he ought to eat of his own earnings and should never be a burden on others. In short, it is the child's moral training which shapes a person into whatever he becomes in the future. Thus, the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] said:

كُلُّ مَوْلُودٍ يُولَدُ عَلَى الْفِطْرَةِ، فَأَبَوَاهُ يُهَوِّدَانِهِ ، أَوْ يُنَصِّرَانِهِ ، أَوْ يُمَجِّسَانِهِ

[Every child is born true to nature. It is his parents who make of him a Jew or a Christian or a Magian]

This means, a child is born of pure nature. Beyond that, it is his

parents who make him Jewish, Christian, or Zoroastrian. It is true that parents take him to the church to make him a Christian, but he also becomes what his parents do and say. Thus, he becomes just like his parents. The fact is that children have a habit of imitating others and if parents do not teach him good deeds, he will mimic others and learn from them. Some people say that we should leave children alone and once they are grown, they will become Ahmadis. I say, if no other voice reaches a child, then it is possible that once exposed, he would accept Ahmadiyyat as a grownup. However, even now, when other's voices reach him and he is absorbing everything, then he will become what he sees and hears. If angels do not convey their point of view, then Satan will befriend him. If he does not hear that which is virtuous, then he will hear that which is evil, and evil is what he will become.

(*Misbah,* May 1945) (*Minhaj-u-tulalabeen,* pp. 50-54)

Address to the Ladies as Jalsa Salana

Delivered by Hazrat Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad, Khalifat-ul-Masih II[ra]

December 1936

The following is a brief summary of Hazrat Khalifat-ul-Masih II's[ra] speech. If at places, the meanings are not clear or this narrative does not convey that which is characteristic of Hazrat Khalifat-ul-Masih II's[ra] speeches, the editor takes full responsibility.

After reciting *Tashahhud*, *Surah Al-Fatihah*, and *Surah Al-Inshirah*, Hazrat Khalifat-ul-Masih II[ra] said:

Each action has an outcome and any work, which does not result in an outcome finds no favor with a wise person. For instance, a farmer works hard in the hopes of an outcome. He plows his land, levels it, sows the seeds, and waters it. He recognizes that his work will not go to waste, for the fruit borne therewith will be many times greater than the effort he puts in. He saw his father and grandfather receive the harvest after they had plowed and planted the seeds. However, he will stop working so hard if he finds that after plowing, leveling, seeding, fertilizing, and watering the crop he no longer receives any harvest, or he no longer reaps a harvest after five or ten seasons. Yet, if he consistently reaps the rewards of his efforts and only very rarely loses his crops, then in that case, he will consult the experts for the cause behind the failure of that season. Consequently, he will act on their advice and have full faith in the positive outcome of his efforts. It is for this reason that he wakes early in the chilly winter mornings to water [his fields] and he happily works in the fields during those sweltering summer days and never tires of hard work. Why is this so? It is because he firmly believes that his efforts and hard work will not go unrewarded and will surely bear fruit.

Thus, consider the following question. In the hopes of reaping crops to support his living for the year, the farmer plants his seeds, worth only a few rupees. He works hard and firmly believes that his

efforts will not go unrewarded. If this is so, then how could the efforts of our hundreds and thousands of men who work for our Jama'at, who sever their own appetites to pay *chanda*, who break their ties with relatives only to join ties with the Jama'at, go to waste? For if spending thousands of rupees and enduring all types of hardships, everything just results in no outcome, then I must say that we are the most unfortunate of all peoples. The farmer bears the fruit of his toils by sowing seeds, the value of which is no more than a few rupees. If we find no return for our expense of thousands of rupees, this can be attributed to two reasons. One, we either follow the wrong path or we have not employed the correct means. A farmer consults the experts to discover the cause behind the loss of his crops and he improves on any weakness. Likewise, we should also determine the condition of the path upon which we tread. Is it the right or wrong path?

For instance, the original foundation of our movement differentiates us from what other [Muslims] follow. Firstly, mainstream Muslims believe that a reformer has yet to come for our reformation, whereas we believe that the reformer has come. He was the Promised Messiah[as], the founder of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community. We believe that the Jesus[as] they await, has already come.

Secondly, we say that the Holy Qur'ān is a living book and obeying the instructions contained within the Holy Qur'ān can raise one to the status of a prophet, whereas our opponents claim that no other prophet will arrive after the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa]. These are the two central and significant differences between us.

There are however a number of minor differences. For instance, Ahmadis say that he who is promised to come, will not appear from outside, but will be from among us [Muslims]. Non-Ahmadis say that he will descend directly from heaven. Ahmadis believe that by following the Holy Qur'ān, one can become the recipient of all awards and virtues, as mentioned in the Holy Qur'ān; whereas non-Ahmadis question what the Holy Qur'ān can tell us, for the only truth is that which we have constructed ourselves. They attach more importance to their own beliefs than they do to the Holy Qur'ān, and yet very few Ahmadi women consider these issues. Not many women look at or thoroughly understand such issues, which is why

they cannot stand up to other women. If our women understood these issues, then no other female adversary could stand up to them.

Thus, we have not erred in adopting the [right] path. If the desired results are not forthcoming, it is due to our own failure to act. For example, if a person places the Holy Qur'ān upside down before someone, and consequently that person cannot read it properly, is that due to the reader's lack of wisdom or a deficiency in the Holy Book itself?

Therefore, every Ahmadi woman should recognize that the Holy Qur'ān and *Hadith* have very clearly stated that the Jesus[as] who has passed, will not reappear. Instead, a reformer will emerge from within the *ummah* of the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa]. The first thing we must study is what God Almighty and the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] have said concerning this [matter]. Only those who spent their entire lives in the service of the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa], his companions[ra], could have truly understood the meaning and the significance of his[sa] sayings.

As is evidenced in the *Hadith*, there was much agitation when the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] passed away, for it happened unexpectedly and his companions[ra] were unaware that his[sa] death would occur so suddenly.

The following *Surah* [*An-Nasr*] was revealed around the time of the Holy Prophet Muhammad's[sa] death:

اِذَا جَآءَ نَصۡرُ اللّٰہِ وَ الۡفَتۡحُ ۙ

وَ رَاَیۡتَ النَّاسَ یَدۡخُلُوۡنَ فِیۡ دِیۡنِ اللّٰہِ اَفۡوَاجًا ۙ

فَسَبِّحۡ بِحَمۡدِ رَبِّکَ وَ اسۡتَغۡفِرۡہُ ؕ اِنَّہٗ کَانَ تَوَّابًا ؕ

"When the help of Allah comes and the Victory,
And thou seest men entering the religion of Allah in troops,
Glorify thy Lord with His praise and seek His forgiveness.
Surely He is Oft-returning with mercy."

(Holy Qu'rān, Ch. 110: V. 2-4)

Which means, 'O people, when you see armies upon armies of people entering Islam, you should glorify Allah and ask him for forgiveness and protection. He indeed returns with mercy.' This was an indication to the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] that he would soon join Allah and that the time for triumph had come upon them. This made his companions[ra] very happy, but Hazrat Abu Bakr Siddiq[ra] began to cry so much that he was unable to speak. Once Hazrat Abu Bakr[ra] had recomposed himself, he sat down and addressed the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa], "O Prophet of Allah, we are ready to sacrifice ourselves, our parents, our wives, and our children." The rest were surprised and questioned the soundness of this elder's mind. However, the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] replied that Hazrat Abu Bakr[ra] understood [this *Surah*] too well. The Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] said that he loved Hazrat Abu Bakr[ra] more than anyone else. If it had been permitted to appoint a *Khalil* [an intimate friend of the highest degree] with the exception of Allah, he would have chosen Abu Bakr[ra].

The Holy Prophet[sa] went on to say that all windows would be closed, except for Abu Bakr's[ra] window. This statement was intended as a prophecy, that upon becoming the *Khalifa,* Hazrat Abu Bakr[ra] would enter the mosque through the window specifically appointed for the sole purpose of leading the prayers. The love that the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] and Hazrat Abu Bakr[ra] possessed for one another demonstrates the lofty spiritual status of Hazrat Abu Bakr[ra]. People asked Abu Bakr[ra] why he had been so upset at this glad tiding of divine succor. He replied that the prophets of Allah come to spread the message of Allah and return to Allah upon completion of their assigned task. Thus, upon hearing these Qur'ānic verses, he said, "May our lives and those of our parents, our wives, and our children be sacrificed for you." One can see from this that from among the companions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa], Hazrat Abu Bakr[ra] best interpreted the Holy Qur'ān.

When the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] passed away, Hazrat Abu Bakr[ra] was out of town. Upon hearing of the passing of the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa], Hazrat 'Umar[ra] drew his sword from its sheath and declared that he would strike at the head of anyone who said that

the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] had passed away. He said that the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] was not dead and had left to commune with Allah, as Hazrat Moses[as] had left to commune with Allah.

Hazrat 'Umar's[ra] declaration had a profound effect on all the other Muslims. One learned companion however became very upset and sent someone to notify Hazrat Abu Bakr[ra] right away because the Muslims' state of mind was taking a turn for the worst. Consequently, Hazrat Abu Bakr[ra] who had been coincidentally out of town, returned and immediately went to where the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] was laid. He removed the fabric which covered his face, kissed him on the forehead, and said, "O Prophet of Allah, may our parents be sacrificed for you. God will not bring two deaths upon you; one that is your own, and the other that of your followers going astray." Even though Hazrat Abu Bakr[ra] was a meek and tender-hearted man, he approached Hazrat 'Umar[ra], who was still standing with sword in hand and said, "O 'Umar, sit down!" Yet, Hazrat 'Umar[ra] who was too unsettled to stay put, stood up again and again. After seeing such emotion, Hazrat Abu Bakr[ra] stood up and recited this verse:

وَ مَا مُحَمَّدٌ اِلَّا رَسُوۡلٌ ۚ قَدۡ خَلَتۡ مِنۡ قَبۡلِهِ الرُّسُلُ ؕ

"And Muhammad is but a messenger. Verily all Messengers have passed away before him.

(Holy Qur'ān, Ch. 3: V. 145)

Which means, O people, Muhammad[sa] has passed away. Those who worshipped (our leader) Muhammad[sa] should know that Allah never dies. Muhammad[sa] was a prophet of Allah. If Muhammad[sa] has passed away, will you turn your back? Hazrat 'Umar[ra] said that such a state came upon him at hearing this verse, that he felt like his legs would crumple beneath him. He felt as if this verse had been revealed that very day.

Notice how this incident that occured immediately after the death of the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa], clearly demonstrated that the companions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] never believed Hazrat Jesus[as] to be alive.

If Hazrat ‘Umar[ra] had believed that Hazrat Jesus[as] was still alive in heaven, he would have certainly made this argument in support of his earlier claim. Had Hazrat ‘Umar[ra] forgotten this? Even if we suppose that Hazrat ‘Umar[ra] had forgotten, then one of the other companions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] would have mentioned that Hazrat Jesus[as] is still alive. Now tell me, who possessed a better understanding of our faith than the companions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa]? There is an old Punjabi adage which goes, “You tell me news of my home, when I am just coming from there.” Is it possible that those companions[ra], who were the most knowledgeable, who were the recipients of countless blessings did not comprehend this concept, but those who would come later would possess a deeper understanding?

It would be strange indeed for Hazrat ‘Umar[ra] to remember Hazrat Moses’[as] incident when he travelled to Mount Sinai to commune with God, but not to remember Hazrat Jesus[as].

Secondly, the peculiar aspect of this verse:

وَ مَا مُحَمَّدٌ اِلَّا رَسُوۡلٌ ۚ

“And Muhammad is but a messenger…”

(Holy Qur’ān, Ch. 3: V. 145)

can only be reasoned if all earlier prophets had passed away. Thus, when this verse supports this [theory], and no one argued that Jesus[as] was not dead, this is clear evidence of the fact that not one companion held this notion. If any one of the companions had believed Hazrat Jesus[as] to be alive, then the news that the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] was dead and Jesus was still living, would prove devastating for him. A poet has depicted the feelings of the companions at that time in a most beautiful way:

كنت السواد لناظرى - فعمى عليك الناظر

من شاء بعدك فليمت - فعليك كنت احاذر

You were the pupil of my eyes. Upon your demise,
the eye has become blind.
Now I do not care who lives and who dies
Because I only feared the occurrence of your death.

This event was of such great significance that after this, how can we presume that Hazrat Jesus[as] still lives? After [this incident], Abdullah bin Saba began to spread dissension. The companions[ra] considered him to be an apostate, for he began to spread the notion that Allah, Who revealed the Holy Qur'ān will once again raise the Holy Prophet[sa] to the same level. If Hazrat Jesus[as] is still alive, then we can say that the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] also lives. The verse that Hazrat Abu Bakr[ra] recited can only mean that either Hazrat Jesus[as] should not be believed to be a Prophet or that the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] came first and then Hazrat Jesus[as] came after him. While in fact, everyone knows that Hazrat Jesus[as] came first and was also a Prophet. Thus, in light of this verse, he has died.

وَ مَا مُحَمَّدٌ اِلَّا رَسُوْلٌ ۚ قَدْ خَلَتْ مِنْ قَبْلِهِ الرُّسُلُ ؕ

"And Muhammad is but a messenger. Verily all Messengers have passed away before him."

(Holy Qur'ān, Ch. 3: V. 145)

This verse clearly shows that all prophets who preceded the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] have passed. Thus, what other evidence is needed, after the evidence of the Holy Qur'ān and that which the companions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] have presented?

The Promised Messiah[as] has put forward a very strong argument. Remember, there are three Qur'ānic verses, which if all ladies learn by heart, then no one can stand a chance at defeating them regarding this topic.

The first is the verse which Hazrat Abu Bakr[ra] recited:

وَ مَا مُحَمَّدٌ اِلَّا رَسُوْلٌ ۚ قَدْ خَلَتْ مِنْ قَبْلِهِ الرُّسُلُ ؕ

"And Muhammad is but a messenger. Verily all Messengers have passed away before him."

(Holy Qur'ān, Ch. 3: V. 145)

And the second verse is mentioned in *Surah Al-Ma'idah* in the last *rukū':*

وَ اِذۡ قَالَ اللّٰہُ یٰعِیۡسَی ابۡنَ مَرۡیَمَ ءَاَنۡتَ قُلۡتَ لِلنَّاسِ اتَّخِذُوۡنِیۡ
وَ اُمِّیَ اِلٰـہَیۡنِ مِنۡ دُوۡنِ اللّٰہِ ؕ قَالَ سُبۡحٰنَکَ مَا یَکُوۡنُ لِیۡۤ اَنۡ اَقُوۡلَ مَا
لَیۡسَ لِیۡ بِحَقٍّ ؕ اِنۡ کُنۡتُ قُلۡتُہٗ فَقَدۡ عَلِمۡتَہٗ ؕ تَعۡلَمُ مَا فِیۡ نَفۡسِیۡ
وَ لَاۤ اَعۡلَمُ مَا فِیۡ نَفۡسِکَ ؕ اِنَّکَ اَنۡتَ عَلَّامُ الۡغُیُوۡبِ ﴿۱۱۷﴾
مَا قُلۡتُ لَہُمۡ اِلَّا مَاۤ اَمَرۡتَنِیۡ بِہٖۤ اَنِ اعۡبُدُوا اللّٰہَ رَبِّیۡ وَ رَبَّکُمۡ ۚ
وَ کُنۡتُ عَلَیۡہِمۡ شَہِیۡدًا مَّا دُمۡتُ فِیۡہِمۡ ۚ فَلَمَّا تَوَفَّیۡتَنِیۡ کُنۡتَ اَنۡتَ
الرَّقِیۡبَ عَلَیۡہِمۡ ؕ وَ اَنۡتَ عَلٰی کُلِّ شَیۡءٍ شَہِیۡدٌ ﴿۱۱۸﴾

"And when Allah will say, 'O Jesus, son of Mary, didst thou say to men, 'Take me and my mother for two gods beside Allah.' He will answer, 'Holy art Thou, I could never say that which I had no right. If I had said it, Thou wouldst have surely known it. Thou knowest what is in my mind, and I know not what is in Thy mind. It is Thou alone Who art the Knower of all hidden things;
I said nothing to them except that which Thou didst command me - Worship Allah, my Lord and your Lord. And I was a witness over them as long as I remained among them, but since Thou didst cause me to die, Thou, hast been the Watcher over them, and Thou art Witness over all things.'"

(Holy Qur'ān, Ch. 5: V. 117-118)

In other words, when Allah poses this question on the Day of Judgment: 'O son of Mary[as]! Did you tell your people to worship you and your mother as gods?' Hazrat Jesus[as] will reply, "My Lord, what authority had I to say that for which I have no right? If I had acted so, You would have known. You know what is in my heart. I cannot even fathom the extent of Your knowledge. You know the unseen. I only said that which You had commanded me to say; that is, 'Worship One God, Who is my Lord and your Lord.' I only watched over them as

long as I lived among them and they continued on the path of *Tauheed* [the worship of One God, the Oneness of God]. Once You caused me to die, You were their Guardian."

God Almighty will ask this question on the Day of Judgment. This verse clearly indicates that Hazrat Jesus[as] states that his followers were not misguided until after his death. According to the verse, if Hazrat Jesus[as] was still living, his followers would not have gone astray, yet the reality is that his followers have indeed gone astray, for they have discontinued their belief in *Tauheed*. Consequently, as the *ummahs* have gone off course, it proves that Hazrat Jesus[as] has passed away. The Holy Qur'ān and the companions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] have decisively concluded that Hazrat Jesus[as] is dead. Thus, the path we have chosen is the right one and we have not erred in following this path. God is not displeased with us.

The second point is that no follower can take special blessings away from the blessings of the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa]. A simple example will explain this. Salāt is obligatory on every adolescent man and woman. Islam commands that every child of seven be taught to observe Salāt. If he does not observe Salāt by the time he turns ten, he must be made to observe it by reprimanding him. We say five obligatory prayers each day and *Al-Hamd Sharif,* [*Surah Al-Fatihah*] must be recited in each and every *rak'at*. There are other *Surahs* which are not recited in some *rak'at*, but *Surah Al-Fatihah* is obligatory and must be recited in every *rak'at.* What is the importance of including this *Surah* in every single *rak'at?* Let us look at the following verse:

اِهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيْمَ ۙ صِرَاطَ الَّذِيْنَ اَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ ۙ

"Guide us in the right path. The path of those upon whom Thou hast bestowed Thy blessings,…"

(Holy Qur'ān, Ch. 1: V. 6-7)

The Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] said there is no Salāt without reciting *Surah Al-Fatihah*. Let us now examine what the straight path is and how the Holy Qur'ān further elaborates upon this. It is revealed in *Surah An-Nisa*:

وَ لَوۡ اَنَّا كَتَبۡنَا عَلَيۡهِمۡ اَنِ اقۡتُلُوۡۤا اَنۡفُسَكُمۡ اَوِ اخۡرُجُوۡا مِنۡ
دِيَارِكُمۡ مَّا فَعَلُوۡهُ اِلَّا قَلِيۡلٌ مِّنۡهُمۡ ؕ وَ لَوۡ اَنَّهُمۡ فَعَلُوۡا مَا يُوۡعَظُوۡنَ
بِهٖ لَكَانَ خَيۡرًا لَّهُمۡ وَ اَشَدَّ تَثۡبِيۡتًا ۙ
وَّ اِذًا لَّاٰتَيۡنٰهُمۡ مِّنۡ لَّدُنَّاۤ اَجۡرًا عَظِيۡمًا ۙ
وَّ لَهَدَيۡنٰهُمۡ صِرَاطًا مُّسۡتَقِيۡمًا ۙ
وَ مَنۡ يُّطِعِ اللّٰهَ وَ الرَّسُوۡلَ فَاُولٰٓئِكَ مَعَ الَّذِيۡنَ اَنۡعَمَ اللّٰهُ عَلَيۡهِمۡ مِّنَ
النَّبِيّٖنَ وَ الصِّدِّيۡقِيۡنَ وَ الشُّهَدَآءِ وَ الصّٰلِحِيۡنَ ۚ
وَ حَسُنَ اُولٰٓئِكَ رَفِيۡقًا ؕ
ذٰلِكَ الۡفَضۡلُ مِنَ اللّٰهِ ؕ وَ كَفٰى بِاللّٰهِ عَلِيۡمًا ؕ

"And if We had commanded them: 'Kill your people or leave your homes,' they would not have done it except a few of them; and if they had done what they are exhorted to do, it would surely have been better for them and conducive to greater strength.
And then We would have surely given them a great reward from Ourself;
And We would surely have guided them in the right path.
And whoso obeys Allah and this Messenger of His shall be among those on whom Allah has bestowed His blessings, namely, the Prophets, the Truthful, the Martyrs, and the Righteous. And excellent companions are these.
This grace is from Allah, and sufficient is Allah, the All-Knowing."

(Holy Qur'ān, Ch. 4: V. 67-71)

These rewards are from God Almighty and God Almighty Himself has instructed us to beseech Him for His rewards. In fact, this entreaty has been made compulsory upon us, so that no Salāt is complete without it.

If it were not possible to attain the status of prophethood, then why were we taught to say this prayer five times a day? No intelligent person would prefer to ask for something which is improbable, therefore why would God do this?

Consider the following story. A man was sitting by the window of his home watching a boy wave a piece of bread before a nearby dog. When the dog ran towards the boy, the boy began to beat the dog with a stick. The man, who was watching this incident through the window became very angry at the boy's behavior and called the boy over by showing him some money. When the boy came closer the man slapped him. The boy began to cry and asked him why he had called him over to give him money but had instead slapped him. The man told the boy that he wished to teach him a lesson for luring the dog over with a piece of bread and then hitting him. Neither the boy nor the dog showed any wisdom. Do you not believe that God has as much intellect as the man [in this story]?

Thus, God says, "Wake up [at night] and beseech Me, and I will give you that which you ask." If He does not do so, then does God order billions of Muslims to pray in the false hopes of receiving something which earlier peoples were awarded?

Muslims rise during the bitter cold nights of winter and leave the comfort of their beds. They cut their comfort short during the short summer nights. It is not merely one person but billions of Muslims are such who have been wrongly promised by Allah to pray and yet their prayers are not answered. It is worth pondering over this because this directive has been revealed in the Holy Qur'ān. These people accuse God of making false promises.

There is a saying that an owner gives, but a storekeeper's stomach tightens [with worry]. God Almighty gives freely, but mullahs claim to guard God's treasures and they refuse to hand out the treasure. Our God says that He will reward anyone in accordance with the status that the person attains. However, the mullahs say that they will not allow that to happen.

Notice how strange it is that the issue of prophethood has been

narrated by women and it has also been discussed in *Surah an-Nisa*, which means the *Surah of Women*. The matter has been raised in the *Surah of Women*, and who else but a woman could resolve this issue? When a disagreement arose among men over this issue, a woman resolved it. This woman was Hazrat A'ishah[ra]. God revealed this issue in the *Surah* of *Women* [*Surah an-Nisa*] and also resolved it through a woman. However nowadays women say that they are not able to comprehend the matter. You should understand it! Every day, we pray to our Lord to grant us some particular blessings. God Almighty has promised in *Surah an-Nisa* that He will grant someone the status they deserve. This issue has now been resolved.

The third issue upon which we differ with others is the advent of the Promised Messiah[as]. We believe that the Promised One has come, and they say he has yet to come. This issue can be reduced to one or two arguments, which the Holy Prophet[sa] put forward in support of his truthfulness.

In the Holy Qur'ān, God Almighty directed the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] to tell his enemies, 'I have spent a lifetime among you before my prophethood, and you admit that I have never told a lie regarding any human being. How is it that I went to sleep one night and awoke the next morning to make false claims regarding God?'

The Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] was known for his honesty and trustworthiness. The Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] was from a very poor family, while Hazrat Khadijah[ra] was the wealthiest woman in Mecca. His abject poverty is evident from the following incident: It was customary among Arabs at the time to send newborn children to a wet-nurse. The wet-nurses who came to Mecca during the year in which the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] was born, refused to take custody of the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa], for after nursing a child, the wet-nurse generally receives a compensation from the family. They did not believe they would get much from this family. At first, Hazrat Halimah also declined to take him but after finding no one else to care for, she came back and took the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] under her care.

Such were the financial conditions of his family, that no wet-

nurse was willing to take him. When the Holy Prophet Muhammad's[sa] mother passed away, he went to live with his uncle. That entire period also passed in deprivation. At mealtime, his uncle's children would make noise, but he[sa] would sit quietly to one side, for the uncle's children knew they were the real owners and he[sa] lived off their remnants. His uncle would often ask him why he did not laugh or play. From this, one can presume that his aunt did not show much affection to him.

On the other hand, Hazrat Khadijah[ra] was a very wealthy woman. She owned many slaves and traded in far-off areas. She would have her slaves report to her after trade expeditions. The Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] began working for her and was sent on one trade expedition. When he returned having made much profit, Hazrat Khadijah[ra] inquired about him from her slaves. The slaves told her that those people she had previously sent on expeditions had kept much of the profit for themselves, but they found the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] to be very trustworthy. She was so impressed upon hearing this, that she sent for his uncle and requested a proposal of marriage to the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa]. The Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] replied that he would agree to the marriage if his uncle approved. Consequently, he married Hazrat Khadijah[ra] with his uncle's approval.

His[sa] honesty and trustworthiness were so great that Hazrat Khadijah[ra] very quickly recognized these qualities within him, and she handed over the entirety of her business and property to him. When she said to him that from now on all her assets would belong to him, he[sa] responded that if that was truly what she desired, was he permitted to control [the property] as he wished? He continued to say that the first order of business would be to release all the slaves and set them free. His piety had made such an impression upon Hazrat Khadijah[ra] that she readily agreed.

Among these slaves, was a slave by the name of Zaid[ra]. He was the son of a rich man and had been kidnapped and sold as a child. His father had been searching for him this whole time and had finally reached Mecca, with a large amount of money. He offered a vast amount of money for his son's return. He said that he had searched for

him for ten years and that after crying for him these past ten years, Zaid's mother had lost her eyesight. The Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] went to the *Ka'bah* and announced, "O people, be witness to this. Zaid is free and here stands his father. Go with him. For ten years, he abandoned his business and squandered a portion of his life to search for you." Zaid[ra] replied, "I recognize my father and we meet again after much time. He has suffered much for my sake and who could say that they do not love their parents? I know that he has wasted ten years of his life in his love for me. However, I see no other parents before me, besides you." Imagine the love and affection Zaid[ra] had for the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa]. His father left weeping, but the son could not bear to be parted from the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa]. Zaid's[ra] example demonstrates the true extent of the honesty, trustworthiness, sincerity, and truthfulness of the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa].

The Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] openly asked, "O people! I have lived a lifetime among you. Tell me now. Have I ever lied to you? Would I then now lie concerning Allah?" It was on this basis that Hazrat Abu Bakr[ra] immediately accepted Holy Prophet Muhammad's[sa] claim.

Hazrat Abu Bakr[ra] was out of town when the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] announced his claim of prophethood. On his way back to the city he had stopped at a friend's home and had just taken off his *chador* to lay down to rest when the maid of the house came and told him, "How unfortunate that your friend [the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa]] has lost his mind and claims that angels have descended upon him." Hazrat Abu Bakr[ra] did not even lay down, but immediately gathered up his *chador* and left for the Holy Prophet Muhammad's[sa] home. There, he asked the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] if it was true that angels had descended upon him. As Hazrat Abu Bakr[ra] was the Holy Prophet Muhammad's[sa] closest friend and he[sa] did not wish for him to falter [in his faith], he[sa] hoped to facilitate the conversation. However, Hazrat Abu Bakr[ra] insisted that the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] swear to him that what he[sa] said was true. The Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] replied that it was indeed true. Hazrat Abu Bakr[ra] replied, "Stand witness to my faith. Why would you lessen my reward [of accepting you] by bringing forward proofs?" These were the people who accepted the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa].

The Promised Messiah[as] was given the same argument to support his claim. Prior to his declaration of prophethood and after the completion of *Baraheen-e-Ahmadiyya*, Muhammad Hussain Batalvi praised the Promised Messiah[as] in one of his magazines. His praise knew no bounds. He wrote that this person was a saint, who served the faith [of Islam] in a way which saw no equal in the past thirteen hundred years [since the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa]]. Many reformers, saints, and scholars had passed through the past 1300 years, yet he felt that no one had served the faith as well as the Promised Messiah[as]. After the Promised Messiah's[as] claim to prophethood, that same maulvi became his staunchest opponent. Yet, one should look at the prophet's life prior to his claim, for even the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] faced great opposition and enmity after he[sa] claimed to be a prophet. The opposition will always make comments afterwards, but the proof is to be found in what was said prior to the claim. Consequently, these three arguments are supported by the Holy Qur'ān.

I will narrate an amusing incident. Mian Nizam-ud-Din was a simple, pious, and righteous person. Those who have seen him, know him well. I was a little boy at the time. He was very fond of tea and would put loose-leaf tea in his mouth and wherever he found water, he would drink hot water mixed with the tea. He was friends with Muhammad Hussain Batalvi and the Promised Messiah[as]. One day, Muhammad Hussain Batalvi told him of the Promised Messiah's[as] claim. He replied that Hazrat Sahib was such a pious man. How could this be? He went to the Promised Messiah[as] and questioned him on his claim that Hazrat Jesus[as] had died. The Promised Messiah[as] responded by saying that it is written so in the Holy Qur'ān.

Nizam-ud-Din said that the Holy Qur'ān states that he is alive. The Promised Messiah[as] said the Holy Qur'ān is our judge. If you can produce one verse from the Holy Qur'ān to support your claim that Hazrat Jesus[as] is alive, then we will admit your belief to be true. In response, Nizam-ud-Din said that he would produce fifty verses to support his claim and then the Promised Messiah[as] would be bound to believe him. The Promised Messiah[as] reiterated to him that if he

produced even one verse, he would be ready to accept him. Nizam-ud-Din said that he was going to go right now and get at least twenty verses from Muhammad Hussain Batalvi. The Promised Messiah[as] once again repeated that if he brought just one verse, he was ready to accept him. Nizam-ud-Din replied that he would leave for Lahore that very day and would return with ten verses. He left for Lahore and in those days Hazrat Hakim Maulana Nur-ud-Din[ra] also happened to be in Lahore on personal business. People wished to see a debate between Muhammad Hussain Batalvi and Hazrat Maulana Nur-ud-Din[ra]. Muhammad Hussain Batalvi wanted to discuss the issue based on *Hadith*, but Hazrat Maulana Nur-ud-Din[ra] wanted to prove the issue based upon the Holy Qur'ān.

Meanwhile, Nizam-ud-Din had reached Lahore and found Maulvi Muhammad Hussain in the Chinain Wali Mosque [a historic Mosque in the city of Lahore]. Nizam-ud-Din asked him, "Forget this spectacle. What would be the purpose? I have brought a very easy decision from the Promised Messiah[as]. Produce at least ten Qur'ānic verses to support the view that Hazrat Jesus[as] is still alive. Hazrat Sahib[as] has said to bring only one verse but write down ten for me." Maulvi Muhammad Hussain Batalvi became very upset and said, "For the past two months, after much suffering and arguing I was finally swaying Nur-ud-Din[ra] towards discussing the issue based upon *Hadith* and now you bring up the Holy Qur'ān again!" Mian Nizam-ud-Din was a just man. He said, "Fine, where the Qur'ān stands, we stand." This clearly shows that we are on the right path and the Holy Qur'ān, *Hadith*, and the reformers of the faith support our viewpoint.

It is the adoption of such means which leads to the straight path, thus prompting the launch of *Tahrik-i-Jadid*. If all men and women understand this path well, then we all shall be the recipients of Allah's help. We tread the right path, but if we do not see progress, it is due to our own weakness. For example, we may own a sword, but we do not know how to yield it. There is a story of a King who had a servant who could cut all four legs of a horse with one swing of his sword. The prince thought that the sword was very good, for it could cut all four feet in one swing. He asked the servant to give him the sword, but he refused. The prince ran crying to the King, complaining

that he had commanded the servant to give him the sword and had been refused. The King called the servant over and said, "What kind of servant are you, that when our boy has requested your sword, you refuse to give it?" The servant gave him the sword, but the prince could not cut the horse's legs with it. He once again ran complaining to his father about the servant. Again, the King called the servant over and said, "You did not give your sword to my boy." The servant responded, "Huzoor, in actuality, it is the very same sword, but he does not wield it properly." Thus, the reality is that it was the servant who wielded [this sword], for the sword itself was of no consequence. Likewise, imagine the Holy Qur'ān as a sword. The same Holy Qur'ān is as though it is dead in the hands of corrupt mullahs. Yet the same Holy Qur'ān is a sword in our hands. The Promised Messiah[as] has taught us how to correctly wield this sword of the Holy Qur'ān. Now, when you are given this sword, if you do not take advantage of it, it is your own fault.

You must search within yourself and find what you have gained through Ahmadiyyat. How unfortunate it is to spend millions and millions of rupees without achieving any outcome. Look at this convention for instance. Oftentimes, women from the villages and towns say that they attend the conventions for the food that is served during the Jalsa. Is this the purpose of the Jalsa? They endure so much discomfort to travel in this chilly weather. They travel by rail which is in itself suffocating. They sleep on piles of hay when they arrive here and eat watered down *daal* [lentils]. They endure all these hardships, but if they do not use these three days of Jalsa to sow the seeds from which they will reap grains for the next three hundred and sixty days, then it is indeed a cause for sorrow.

And truly, when you take the seeds of recognizing God from these three days and remain strong in the [next] three hundred and sixty days, then you will receive God's support and aid. And, once you have attained Allah's help and assistance, you will have achieved everything. All the discomforts and troubles you have endured to attend Jalsa will no longer appear as such but will feel comforting to you. You will feel as if you no longer eat *daal,* but gold. You will feel as if you do not sleep on hay, but on a mattress, and that you travel on the most luxurious of trains. However, this is only possible when you

take advantage of all this.

From one item, one person will derive a benefit whilst another will come to harm from that very same thing. For example, one person may derive nourishment from a dish of *salan*, whereas another may feel a pain in his stomach after consuming that same *salan*. Those very grapes and guavas which bring delight to one's heart and mind, may bring energy to one person's body, while causing cholera in others. The same grass, when consumed by a female goat is converted into milk, whereas when consumed by the male goat, buffalo or bull, is only converted into waste products.

No doubt, the Holy Qur'ān is a very superior book, but the work you perform will only be according to the machine that lies within you. For you see, both a female and male goat eat grass and in one there is a mechanism which produces milk from that grass, while in the other is a mechanism which makes waste and empties it.

Thus, if piety and righteousness lie within your hearts a spiritual milk will flow from within you, making you mothers for the whole world. However, if you lack piety and righteousness then even the most superior of knowledge will deteriorate into little more than waste within you, making you and others disgusted by your own behavior. So, inculcate the love of God within yourselves. How many of you love God more than you love your children and husbands? In all honesty, if your children were called up for sacrifice, how many of you would happily and willingly agree to do so?

Take the example of Hazrat Khansa'[ra]. She was a very rich woman. Her husband lost all her wealth through gambling and even when she continued to borrow more money from her brothers, he lost even that. The husband died at a very young age, and she raised her four sons. She converted to Islam at an old age. It is narrated that before a battle, the soldiers had sworn to either return victorious or lose their lives there. Hazrat Khansa'[ra] called all four of her children. She reminded them of the hardships she had endured to raise them, of being widowed at an early age, that their father had been a gambler and had lost all her wealth and property. She had worked hard to bring them up. She told them that she would send them off to war that day

and that they should either return triumphant or sacrifice their lives there but to never show their backs to the enemy. She sent off all four of her children and fulfilled her responsibility to Allah. Shortly thereafter, she went to the forest and before her God, prayed while weeping, having fulfilled her motherly right. God Almighty granted them victory that evening.

[I would like to mention] Muhammad Sharif, who resides in Gujrat where a skirmish is currently underway. The British council asked him to leave in order for him to stay safe, but he refused to go. The council said that the government would pay for his travel expenses, but he declined saying that he had come there to sacrifice his life. Finally, he was forced to leave. Thus, you should not be content with your neighbor's children attaining such great heights. Rather, you should strive for your own children to set a noble example also.

I have initiated some small schemes within the Jama'at, such as asking you to prepare one dish a day and to lead a simple life, etc. However, still many men, women, and girls do not participate in these schemes. Those of meager means already cannot afford more than one dish a day, therefore this scheme is providing them with extra blessings. I asked women to refrain from applying gold lace [due to expense] upon their clothes. If someone already owns such lace, they may wear it only when attending marriage celebrations. Some women of reduced means ask for permission to apply fake gold lace or applique. I tell them that those who use genuine gold lace upon their clothes have at least some wealth to display but those who use fake gold lace only confirm their poverty. However, some still do not refrain from engaging in this wastefulness.

We should respect the value of each and every coin. Rupees are made by saving coins. Thus, value the money you have. Take that money and spend it on buying *ghee* [clarified butter] for your children, which will improve their health. What benefit could fake lace have? Additionally, you should no longer buy fake jewelry. What has already been purchased, so be it, but follow what has been previously instructed to you before further rules are introduced.

Do not buy groceries from the door-to-door grocers selling on

the street. Most of the time, the items purchased from them are not needed. If you had really needed something, you would have requested your husbands to go to the market and buy it for you. However, buying cloth from the street vendor shows that you ended up purchasing the cloth not because it was needed but because you saw it and then decided to purchase it. Therefore, keep in mind to refrain from buying anything which is unnecessary. Lead a simple life.

I am hopeful that you will ready yourself before the Call from God comes. Keep the fasts as prescribed to you by Islam. How many of you have made up the fasts you missed previously before the next Ramadan? Make up all the missed fasts before the next Ramadan comes. Live simply so that you become a role model for your sons and daughters. May God Almighty shower His mercy upon you. The children of those parents who have brought them up this way, will pray for their parents and also become a blessing for the community and nation at large. Thus, inculcate such a spirit of Ahmadiyyat within yourselves and take with you such seeds that when you leave [this Jalsa], your heart is permeated with light and awareness of the truth. May they be the seeds that bear the kind of fruit that you will enjoy all year round and which will improve the life for your children, your spouses, your brothers, sisters, and your neighbors.

A Child's Upbringing is Dependent upon the Mother's Moral State

Delivered by Hazrat Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmood Ahmad, Khalifat-ul-Masih II[ra]

At a *Nikah* sermon, Hazrat Khalifat-ul-Masih II[ra] said:

The Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] said, Paradise lies under the feet of mothers. This does not literally mean that paradise lies under the feet of mothers, but that paradise can be attained by a mother's good training. Paradise can never be found under the feet of a mother who does not provide good training, does not correct a child's morals, and does not familiarize a child with their religion. In that case, the child is ruined. Without a doubt, the father is the caregiver, head of the family, and the one in charge. Due to financial reasons, he often stays outside the home and spends very little time at home. In that little time at home, he cannot fully oversee the training of his children. At the age of five or six children are more likely to imitate and learn habits. At that time, the father can neither correct them nor watch over them, nor can he send the children to a teacher who could teach the children proper etiquette.

Only a mother, with whom a child spends all their time, can supervise him. If a mother lies in front of the child, the child will also learn to lie. If a mother steals, the child will also learn to steal. If a mother is careless and negligent towards her faith, then the child will also be careless and heedless of their faith. If a mother speaks the truth in front of the child, then the child will also adopt the habit of speaking the truth. If the mother greets others with good manners and love, the child will also learn those good manners. If the mother shows mercy to the poor and needy, then the child will also develop the inclination to be merciful. If a mother is religious and fears God, then the child will also grow to be religious and God fearing.

Thus, a child's future depends on the moral training of mothers, and this is the true meaning behind the Holy Prophet

Muhammad's[sa] *Hadith*, that paradise lies under the feet of mothers. In these times, many mothers do not provide their children with adequate moral training and instead of correcting their mistakes, they actually spoil their children. Those mothers who raise their children to be careless regarding their faith, cannot be counted among those mothers who are said to have paradise under their feet.

If children do not possess good morals, people will accuse the mother of being neglectful. If the children are good, people will praise the mother because the early training which affects a child's future can only be provided by a mother. The father's name is not mentioned, for he happens to have very little time to watch over his children. However, the mother has all the time to take advantage of the opportunity to supervise and reform her children. She is always with them, and they are always in need of their mother. The child continuously observes his mother's behavior and love. They then cultivate within themselves those very behaviors and habits which their mother has, whether they are good or bad. Through this means [of the mother], a notable change occurs which forever impacts the child's future.

(*Nikah* Sermon, 30 June 1937)

We Should Pay Great Attention to Reformation

Friday Sermon
Delivered by Hazrat Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad,
Khalifat-ul-Masih II[ra]

April 1, 1938

… Hazrat A'ishah[ra] always safeguarded the rights of women. When women would bring complaints against their husbands before the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa], Hazrat A'ishah[ra] would fervently back these women and repeatedly state that their rights were being violated and this should not be so. Even the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] said, "A'ishah[ra] you greatly favor the women," but she continued to involve herself in [advocating for] their affairs.

Once the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] decided to perform *Itikaf* When Hazrat A'ishah[ra] came to know of this, she immediately put up a tent in the mosque for *Itikaf*. Upon seeing this, the other *Ummahatul-Mu'minin* [the mothers of the believers, i.e., the Holy Prophet's[sa] wives] also put up their individual tents. When the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] saw that tents were set up as though an army had come to station itself at the mosque, he inquired as to what was going on. The companions[ra] of the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] replied that the tents belonged to the mothers of the believers which were set up to isolate themselves from each other [for *Itikaf*]. The Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] ordered that they be removed at once, for if these tents were left up, there would be no room for people to pray.

Hazrat A'ishah[ra] always took great care to safeguard the rights of women, but it is also narrated that on one occasion, after the demise of the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa], she stated that if the condition of women in the time of the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] was as it was when she was saying this [i.e., after the demise of the Holy Prophet[sa]], he[sa] would have forbidden women from coming to the mosque. Now, this narration is from a time not too far removed from the demise of the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa]. At the most, only thirty to forty years had passed. However, Hazrat A'ishah[ra] revealed

that if these conditions had presented themselves a few years earlier, the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] would have forbidden women from attending the mosque. He[sa] would have revoked the permission he[sa] had given women to visit the mosque.

The possibility of the Holy Prophet[sa] revoking his permission tells us that the women of that time or women from other nations were in all probability not observing proper *purdah*. In all likelihood, people were complaining about them, and so she[ra] responded in this manner. Similarly, some people raise such objections in Qadian. Despite Hazrat A'ishah's[ra] objection, that period is known as the best of times, for she objected only for the sake of the women's reformation and not because the whole nation had been spoiled. However, this does not mean that we should continue such practices, but we should worry over how we will change them. Such a reformation can only be achieved by counseling the youth about such practices, so that they cultivate a spirit within themselves and become capable of showing the true face of Islam and Ahmadiyyat.

(*Al-Fazl*, April 10, 1938, p. 3)

Lajna Should be Established Everywhere and all Adult Ahmadi Women Should be Made Members

Excerpts from the Friday Sermon Delivered by Hazrat Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad, Khalifat-ul-Masih II[ra]

October 28, 1938, in Delhi

The three sections of the Jama'at, including men, women, and children should weave their respective auxiliaries together and accomplish real training.

This movement has three major parts: the first is the reformation of men, the second is the reformation of women, and

third is the reformation of children. No nation in the world can be successful without a specific purpose towards which men, women, and children all work together. Therefore, it is the duty of every Jama'at to reform their men, women, and children. The establishment of Lajna is vital for the reformation of women, but I regret to say that it has been considered *Fard-e-Kafayah* [that which is considered obligatory for the community, so if one member offers it, it is considered offered on the behalf of the whole community]. Only a few women join the Lajna, and the rest do not believe it is necessary for them to participate in this organization. Therefore, it is necessary for Lajna Ima'illah to be established everywhere and all adult women should participate in it. Not even one member should be excluded, for this is the only way to reform women. I have come to know from reports sent from Delhi that only ten to twelve women attend meetings and give lectures. However, as long as even one woman remains excluded, our organization remains incomplete.

If we have not made it compulsory to join Lajna, it does not mean that women should also deem it unnecessary to join. Our intent is that they happily and willingly join the organization and through this, they attain God Almighty's blessings and happiness. This is comparable to the Holy Prophet's[sa] instruction that *Nafl* is a source of obtaining nearness to God. However, he[sa] also stated that he[sa] did not wish to make anything compulsory with regards to *Nafl*. In the same manner, it is my wish that my children refrain from taking up employment with the government. However, I have never forbidden them from doing so, for if they refrain per my orders, I shall be the one to receive the blessings and not them. The Holy Prophet[sa] desired to benefit his community in the same manner, therefore he[sa] placed no restrictions regarding *Nafl*.

Recognize your Responsibilities Regarding the Training of your Children and Apply all the Principles of Tahrik-e-Jadid within your Daily Lives

Delivered by Hazrat Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad, Khalifat-ul-Masih II[ra]

December 27, 1938, Jalsa Salana

After reciting *Tashahhud* and *Surah Al-Fatihah*, Hazrat Khalifat-ul-Masih II[ra] said:

In our country, there is a popular tale. In fact, there is even a proverb about which it says, 'The crow forgot his own style of walking when trying to walk like a goose.' The story goes that a crow happened to see some geese and came to like the way they walked. He thought to himself, 'I do not like the way I walk.' He picked up some goose feathers, stuck them within his own feathers, and began to walk like them. But how long could he continue to do this? The geese viewed him as a strange bird and began to strike him. He left the geese and went back to his own flock of crows. However, since he had adopted the geese's behavior for some time and had forgotten his own, the crows stuck out their beaks and struck him over and over again, pushing him away. The crow now stood all alone, neither belonging here nor there, accepted neither by the geese nor by the crows. The moral of the story is that whomever God Almighty has chosen for a particular task will have the capacity to perform that task well. There is a saying in Urdu, 'A job only suits the person to whom it is assigned.' When someone attempts to do another person's job, there are bound to be mistakes and confusion and it will be detrimental to the end result.

God Almighty has divided humans in two: into men and women. God Almighty has bestowed upon them some similarities, as well as some differences. For example, both genders need food for their survival. It will never be the case that only men need food and

women do not. However, there are slight differences in the type of food that is more suitable for each gender. For example, some women's bodies may require a different type of nutrition than men. An example of this would be that women tend to retain more fat on their bodies and thus may be able to withstand the cold better. This is in order to enable women to nurse their infants and thus, God Almighty has provided for the child's wellbeing.

It is God Almighty's wisdom which lies behind this difference [between the two]. Men and women have both been given an equal potential to progress and acquire wisdom. Men cannot say that only we have been given wisdom and intellect, nor can women claim the same. Likewise, the ability to speak has been given to both men and women. If some men are great speakers, so are some women. God Almighty has given both men and women hands and feet but has endowed each with different strengths. In some qualities, God Almighty has granted more strength to men and less to women. God Almighty has granted men more physical strength than women. Compared to women, men can lift much heavier weights. On the other hand, God Almighty has granted women a greater degree of patience. The word patience here means the ability to tolerate a hardship for an extended period of time. This ability is either non-existent or very limited in men.

This can be illustrated by presenting the example of children. When a child cries, a frown barely crosses the mother's face, whereas there may be only one in a hundred men who would have that kind of patience. In this case, God Almighty has fashioned a woman's heart into a mountain of strength. Give the world's best male philosophers a child to care for one day and by the end of the day, they will have gone half-witted. In comparison, when it comes to traveling or the case of wars, it is men who are most capable. Here, no matter how intelligent women may be, they are likely to become nervous. Even though when it comes to raising a child, even the most uneducated woman proves to be more intelligent and learned than the most knowledgeable of men. This particular strength [patience] is so profusely present in women while the smallest fraction of it cannot be found within men. There are some men who know how to raise

children.

In my own experience, I have seen many men, who have raised their children well. For example, one man's wife died, leaving one girl and one boy. The man did not re-marry and instead raised his children himself. The same is true in the case of a friend from Qadian, Pir Ifthikhar Ahmad[ra], who was Hazrat Khalifat-ul-Masih I's[ra] brother-in-law and the son of Munshi Ahmad Jaan[ra]. God Almighty had blessed Munshi Ahmad Jaan[ra] with so much wisdom that even before the Promised Messiah[as] proclaimed to be the Messiah, he wrote to him:

ہم مریضوں کی ہے تمہي پہ نظر تم مسیحا بنو خدا کے لیے ۔
تم مسیحا بنو خدا کے لیے

"We who are ill look towards you. May you become the Messiah for the sake of God, may you become the Messiah for the sake of God."

Munshi Sahib was a very devout and pious man. His son, Pir Ifthikhar Ahmad was very good at raising children. The late Maulvi Abdul Karim[ra] was a great member of the Ahmadiyya Jama'at. He was very close to the Promised Messiah[as] and held the community's honor in great regard. In those days, there was no concept of formality or luxury. Pir Sahib[ra] lived in a small room in the Promised Messiah's[as] house. Maulvi Abdul Karim[ra] who lived in a room above Pir Sahib's room, would grow very upset upon hearing the cries of Pir Sahib's[ra] children. He would often ask Pir Sahib[ra], "What kind of a father are you? Why do you not quiet your children? I grow very anxious when I hear them cry." Due to the earthquake in 1905, the Promised Messiah[as] went to stay in a friend's orchards. It happened that Maulvi Abdul Karim[ra] and Pir Ahmad's[ra] tents were adjacent to each other. One day, Maulvi Sahib[ra] said to Pir Sahib[ra], "Pir Sahib! When your children cry, you hug one gently to your shoulder while speaking gently to the other one. If it were me, I would not be able to do so. Rather, I grow quite anxious upon seeing this." Pir Sahib smiled and replied, "What I do not understand is that I am the one holding the children and you are the one growing anxious." Thus, there are certainly men who are patient. However, generally speaking, if men are compelled to take care of their children, they grow anxious after only a short time.

I become anxious if I must look after a child for even five minutes. Yet, women manage to cook, clean, read, write and take care of other household responsibilities, while not growing the least bit irritated by the crying or the care of their children. If they do become irritated, they give the child a gentle slap and the very next minute, they will be hugging them. Thus, God Almighty has differentiated the nature [of men and women]. If one wished to change the roles of the two, then neither would be successful. Each person is meant to perform his own specific function. For example, if one wished to perform with his foot that task which is to be performed by his hand, or vice versa, it would be impossible to do so. There are many tasks done by the hand, which a foot can either not perform at all or if it can, would do so quite unsuccessfully. The work of hands and feet are different and God Almighty has bestowed each with different purposes.

Thus, where God Almighty has made men and women similar in some instances, he has also made them different regarding their separate roles [in society]. However, it is regretful that our men and women often fail to understand these differences. Men often emphasize the differences, while women tend to stress the commonality and similarities between the two. Whereas the reality is that they are both mistaken. After marriage, a man tends to view the woman as an insignificant animal, who upon marrying him, should abandon all past connections. He expects that she should become one with him and associate only with his relatives. If she wishes to visit or help her own relatives, he objects and is annoyed. He may in his impudence, insult her relatives. He does not stop to think that God Almighty has given her the same heart He has given him. Because of such behavior, the woman's health suffers, and she keeps her feelings bottled up which may result in the development of illnesses such as tuberculosis.

In my opinion, illnesses such as hysteria and it's like, which are so common nowadays, are also the result of this. Thus, a man tends to believe that a woman has no awareness, even though a woman harbors a heart within her chest, just as a man harbors a heart within his chest. If he believes that his wife has a loving heart, then how can he expect his wife to sever all ties with the mother who raised her from

a time, when if the man had seen her then, he would have turned away from her in dislike.

Today's mothers-in-law are similar. They forget how it was when they were young, how they were treated by their husbands or their mothers-in-law. Similarly, mothers-in-law do not give proper regard to the feelings or needs of their daughters-in-law, and instead argue with them over petty issues. This is wrong. There have been many examples in this world which prove that men do not care for women's feelings, or that they do not believe women to have a heart or any feelings. On the women's side, this type of a situation is rarely seen. Although there are some women who believe men should forget everything else and associate only with their wives, however this is rare.

We can look to the example of the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa], who took great care to safeguard the feelings of his[sa] relatives. Once upon entering his home, he saw his wife, Umm-e-Habibah[ra], [Abū Sufyān's daughter[ra]] sitting with her brother's head in her lap and playing with his hair. The Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] asked, "Umm-e-Habibah[ra], is Mu'awiyyah very dear to you?" She answered, "Yes." The Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] said, "He is very dear to me as well."

Today's educated women are beginning to feel that they can do everything that men can do. Men wrestle, so women have also begun wrestling. A woman's modesty and wrestling do not go together. Similarly, women say they want to become employed. However, if they become employed their children will be destroyed. How will they be able to morally train their children? It is the wrong type of education which has planted this sort of incorrect notion into women's minds. In the western world, many voices have been raised in favor of women adopting this approach. Therefore, those countries where people prefer to have children, they desire that all doors of employment be shut for women and that women should fulfill the duty for which they were made. Children are the most precious possession in a home and a mother's top priority should be the proper upbringing and education of her children. If women take up jobs, then the proper upbringing of children is impossible.

My purpose with this introduction is to illustrate that where God Almighty has bestowed women with empathy, a caring heart, and a good mind so that she may gain a clear understanding, He has also instilled clear differences and similarities between men and women. Men should carry out the duties assigned to them according to their differences and women should carry out their own duties. Certainly, where both men and women have shared responsibilities, those are obligatory. For example, where Salāt, fasting, and pilgrimage are incumbent upon men, they are also incumbent upon women, so that each individual can attain their own reward or punishment according to their deeds. This decree is in accordance with God Almighty's wisdom. However, in terms of war, the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] has said that war is not incumbent upon women. It is ordained for men, while women can tend to the care of the wounded.

The actual responsibility of women is the proper care and upbringing of their children, and this responsibility is no less than the responsibility of *Jihad.* If children are raised up properly, then the foundation of the nation is sound, and it can progress. However, if children are not raised up properly, then one day, the nation will certainly be destroyed. Hence, the future prosperity or destruction of any nation hinges upon the women of that nation. If the mothers of today were to morally train their children as the companions[ra] of the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] did, is it not probable that their children would grow to be warriors of the nation, ready to sacrifice their lives, just as the children of the companions[ra] of the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] did? If today, God forbid, any weakness develops in the Ahmadiyya Jama'at, women will be held responsible.

Thus, the responsibility given to mothers is so very important, and even if sincere men desired to carry out the task of properly raising their children, they would not have the capacity to do so because the strength and the aptitude to morally train children lies only within women.

Therefore, you should not take this responsibility lightly, rather you should attend to this responsibility with your utmost attention. How many among you desire that your children be beautiful or healthy? If your child is not very good looking or is not so fair, you

will look the world over for any sort of powder to apply on your child to make him more attractive [in Indian culture, fairness is considered attractive]. Yet, even if you give him the appearance of a human, but his soul does not resemble that of a human, could you be happy upon seeing him? If you do not care for the beauty of your child's spirit, then you have proven yourself to be his worst enemy, for you used all means possible to take care of his outside appearance, but you allowed Satan to breed from within him.

Hence, if the women of today forego the proper care and upbringing of their children, the future generations will have the traits of snakes and scorpions. When you see these deadly, venomous snakes and scorpions in the faces or shapes of your children, will you be happy? If your children turn out to be righteous because of the pious upbringing you provide them, someday they will be praying for your souls; otherwise, they will only end up cursing you.

There are many such examples where mothers instilled the habits of lying, cheating, and stealing within their children. For example, there was a child who had the habit of stealing. He stole things from outside the home or from school and brought them home. His mother accepted these stolen items from him. As a result, he became a hardened burglar and murderer. He then was caught and given the death penalty according to the law. Just prior to his hanging, he was asked for his last wish. He said, "I would like to see my mother." When she arrived, he used the excuse of whispering something in her ear and invited her to come closer, at which point he bit her ear. When asked why he bit his mother, he replied, "If she was not my mother, I would not be awaiting my death. It is she who transformed me from a person into a Satan."

Mothers do not necessarily intentionally teach their children bad habits or incorrect behavior. Rather, it is a mother's carelessness and lack of attention which can lead to bad habits or behaviors within children. However, the responsibility still falls upon the mothers. There are many among you, who would say, 'I do not care if my child cannot recite the *Kalima*, as long as he stays alive.' How many of you would say, 'Let my child recite the *Kalima* and then if he must die, so be it.'

Once a woman brought her unwell child to the Promised Messiah[as] and said, "My child has become Christian. Please treat him." The one thing which she repeatedly stressed was that the Promised Messiah[as] should persuade him to say the *Kalima* [*Shahada*] one more time. Then if he died afterwards, she would no longer be in turmoil. Since the child was ill, the Promised Messiah[as] sent him to Hazrat Khalifat-ul-Masih I[ra], so that he could treat him as well as preach to him. However, the boy was firm in his beliefs and one night, he ran away to avoid reciting the *Kalima*. Upon discovering this, his mother chased after him and caught up with him near Batala [a town nineteen kilometers from Qadian] and made him return with her. In the end, God heard her prayers and the boy reverted to his Islamic beliefs. Soon afterwards, he died, but the mother said that her heart was at peace, for her son had recited the *Kalima* before he died.

This is an example of a truly righteous upbringing, and this is the type of spiritual faith which Islam wishes to suffuse within women's hearts. It is this sort of woman, who desires to see her children filled with righteousness and to be well-trained, who not only benefit themselves, but also benefit the whole nation. Such women can revive a nation.

Imam Bukhari was a great man, and his mother deserved a good portion of credit for that. Do you think his mother was not granted extra blessings when people benefited from such an able mother? No, for *Imam* Bukhari's mother certainly received a good portion of the special blessings he received for his righteousness. In the same way, you cannot say that *Imam* Abu Hanifah's mother was an ordinary woman. She was certainly not an ordinary woman. Can the woman who brought up a personage such as Abu Hanifah, be ordinary? God Almighty states in the Holy Qur'ān that when a person is given an elevated status, his parents and his relatives will also be raised with him, and they will also receive those blessings. Parents play a key role in the making of a true believer. Do not think that if the child of a Christian or a Hindu becomes Muslim, his mother will not receive the blessings thereof. Even if she is not granted complete salvation, her sins will be greatly lessened. Most of you wish to take part in *jihad* but let me tell you that raising your children properly and making them righteous is in fact *jihad*.

Under other social systems, you may say that if you were to remain occupied with raising children, then you will not be able become businesswomen, or ministers, or lawyers, or generals and you will not be able to establish peace in the world. However, in following Islam you cannot say this. Perhaps, this response will not satisfy Christian nations, but Islam has provided you with a very thorough explanation in response to this argument. According to Islam, if your son becomes a general and brings peace to the world through his work, then his mother also receives her share of blessings for raising such a son who has brought peace to the world. Thus, the Paradise which is promised to your son is the same Paradise promised to you. Therefore, the true fruit of your life's labor is dependent upon the proper upbringing of your children. Direct your attention to praying, keeping fasts, and giving charity. If you do not heed this advice, how will your children heed the teachings of *Shariah*? You can to a certain extent, raise your children properly by setting a good example yourself, for it is true that when one sets an example, those around them follow it; and certainly, children have a great ability to copy others. If mothers do not set good examples for their children, then surely it would be near impossible for their children to be raised righteously.

Additionally, God Almighty has decreed in the Holy Qur'ān that seeking knowledge is incumbent upon both men and women. That knowledge which is gained for worldly benefit does not reap any blessings. God Almighty rewards those honorable deeds, which remain unrewarded in this world. Granted, the greater portion of knowledge men seek is for their business or work, but they receive no blessings for this type of knowledge. However, after completing their formal education, women have a golden opportunity to attain blessings, since there is no worldly pressure put upon women who desire to complete their education. Rather, completing their education is for the sake of acquiring knowledge. Therefore, women can acquire blessings while completing their formal education.

Just as God Almighty states that when you fast or pray you do not receive any return for it in this world, therefore, God promises us our just rewards in the Hereafter. When you raise your sons and educate them, they in turn work and take care of your needs as necessary. Therefore, you have gained the benefit of their education

here on earth. However, the reward for that which you spent on a girl's education is not given here on this earth. The Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] has said, "The man who has two daughters, provides them with a good education and raises them well, will go to Heaven." Thus, the reward of Heaven is promised in return for a girl's education, but not for a boy's education. This responsibility of a proper upbringing is no small matter. You can only impart knowledge to others when you are knowledgeable yourself. Therefore, you first must gain knowledge yourselves in order to raise your children properly. It is your duty to immediately draw your attention to enhancing your knowledge and moral training. If you do not pay attention to your own morality and education, your nation cannot be rectified. For certainly, the service you could offer the Jama'at will remain forever unfulfilled by you. Do not deem that to be inconsequential.

Remember well, the service you offer to Islam and Ahmadiyyat by raising your children to the best of your ability, cannot be done by anyone else. You must strive to train them from their infancy onwards, in such a way that when they grow up, they will be ready to sacrifice their lives for the cause of their faith. From childhood, you should teach them to always be truthful and to never lie. For if your child lies, he not only puts you to shame, but also angers God Almighty. You must teach your children that their lives are meant to serve the cause of the faith. For when the time comes to sacrifice their lives, their hearts will first be filled with worry for their mothers and their wives who they will leave behind. If you were to let them know that you will be happy when they either return victorious or die striving, then their burden will be lightened. Only then will they grow brave and triumph in the field of sacrifice and they will not hesitate even for one second in sacrificing their lives for Islam. Why did the companions[ra] of the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] achieve so many successes? It was because they recognized that their death would not ravage their mothers with grief. They knew their deaths would not wreak havoc upon their wives. Rather, it would be an occasion of happiness and joy for them. Therefore, time and time again, they set off fearlessly and each time, they returned victorious.

During the battle of Uhud, one woman demonstrated such

strength of faith that the world is found severely lacking in the face of her example. During this battle, a rumor was spread that the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] had been martyred. In anguish, women began running toward the battlefield. One woman came forward and questioned a soldier about [the well-being of] the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa]. The soldier replied, "O woman, your husband has been martyred." The woman asked, "I only wish to know about the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa]. Tell me how he is." The soldier replied, "Your father has been killed as well." Still, the woman did not show any concern and once again inquired, "Give me news of the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa]." The soldier, not understanding the true nature of her anguish, replied, "Your brother has also been killed." The woman then very forcefully and with anger demanded, "I am asking about the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa]. Not my husband, nor my father, nor my brother." The soldier then replied, "The Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] is well." Upon hearing the news, a tremor of joy and contentment ran through the woman, who instinctively said, "*Al-Hamdu Lillah*, Allah's messenger is not hurt. If others have met their deaths, it matters not." Take a moment to consider why that woman's father, husband, and brother went into battle without hesitation. It was because her husband knew that if he were to die in battle, his wife would not grieve. Her brother knew that his sister would be as good as dead if the battle was lost. Why then, do your children know fear? They learn it by seeing other women cry when men leave, and this turns your children into cowards.

Thus, you can serve Islam in the greatest manner if you can turn your sons into another Abu Bakr[ra] or 'Umar[ra]. Then surely that lofty status which your son will achieve, will be yours as well.

And now, I would specifically like to draw your attention to *Tahrik-e-Jadid.* The most important aspect of this for women is to live a simple life. Practice simplicity in your dress, jewelry, and food. At this time, the condition of India is very poor, with the majority of the country's wealth going to Europe. The condition of the Muslims is also quite dissolute. An Indian has no standing even before the lowliest British person. A British janitor, who comes to India, will earn more respect in India than an Indian, who will be completely disregarded. It is because the British are the masters, while we are their servants. For

this reason, our country is growing weaker by the day.

The strange thing is that our countrymen are making their own conditions worse. They are bent upon weakening their country by way of their [emphasis upon] jewelry and wealth. Farmers may live simply, but they tend to spend more than they can afford on their weddings, and they waste the rest of their lives paying off the accumulation of interest. We have a real-life example of someone in Ferozepur who borrowed fifty rupees, but in paying off interest upon interest, the result was that he ended up paying hundreds of thousands in debt!

Similarly, people who live in the city also tend to do unnecessary overspending. I have brought this to the Jama'at's attention several times before and I am bringing this to your attention again today. Instead of taking out loans why do you not save first, so that you are not compelled to take out a loan? You may say that there is nothing left over to save, but when you do not have enough money for food, do you simply skip a meal? Of course not. You go and get a loan for the groceries. I say to you, go hungry, so that your children will pray for you in the future. Every person can save some amount of money to the extent of his or her means. If you begin to save a little at a time and continue to keep saving, then your husband will not be compelled to go to moneylenders to borrow money.

After all, reflect for yourself, why would you put your children in debt for a mere four or five rupees? Borrowing this trivial amount of money could result in your children spending the rest of their lives in servitude to pay off the debt. They will always say, 'God have mercy on our grandfather for he has burdened us with a debt of ten thousand rupees, forced us to live in servitude to the moneylender.' If their mothers had consistently saved even a small amount and kept their desires in check, they would not have taken out a loan and would have been saved from a life of servitude.

Being frugal is the first and foremost duty of the citizen of any nation and it is this prudence, which can lead a nation towards success. You must stop your husband from unnecessary spending and save your children from servitude. Thus, continue to save one thing or other and attempt to maintain simplicity in what you eat.

One benefit of eating one meal will be that it would bring the rich and the poor together, eliminating the differences between the classes. The second benefit of eating one meal is that a person stays healthy. Overeating causes one's stomach to weaken and stomach problems, such as diarrhea and heartburn become persistent problems. A person with such illnesses may not be able to pray or even fast. Those who are fond of food are busy dreaming of chicken and kebabs even when praying. In contrast, a simple life is filled with such bliss, that acts of worship take on an added facet of enjoyment.

A Sufi was once asked "How does one find God?" He replied, "By eating less, sleeping less, and talking less. These three things will lead to God." Hence, *Tahrik-e-Jadid* focuses upon the consumption of less. By adopting a simple life, you will make a stew, so that you are more able to easily feed two or four more poor people along with yourselves. In this way, your heart will be filled with joy and the hearts of the poor will be filled with joy, which will in turn please God.

Therefore, if you spend less on food, you will have more to offer the needy and you will spend less money overall. You can spend the money left over on your children's education, give more easily to *chanda*, and spend on other religious works. If wealthy women would adopt these habits, they could even help control their husband's unnecessary spending. I have seen many examples where women have straightened out their husbands' lavish spending and in doing so, helped turn their husbands' attention towards religious matters. Thus, due to their simple manner of living, they persuade their husbands to also adopt simplicity.

Hence, women play an extraordinary role in *Tahrik-e-Jadid*. You can assist your husbands financially, by adopting simplicity in their eating habits. The woman who seeks pleasure in jewelry will be unable to perform lofty deeds. Hence, eat simple meals, wear simple clothing, aim to achieve simplicity, otherwise God Almighty Himself will bring about austerity within your life. In this day and age, God Almighty desires to establish a new kingdom. In this new kingdom the rich will become poor, and the poor will become rich. The trials and tribulations the rich will endure will be of their own doing and no one

else's. If you wish to achieve peace and comfort in this world and you also wish to please God, then give a portion of your wealth to the poor. If you do not do this, then the day is near when God will make his own arrangements for the poor. You must not wait for that day to come, but you should strive to gain those blessings for yourselves now. I am hopeful that you will pay strict attention to the upbringing and training of your children and make yourselves a shining example for the world.

(*Misbah,* January 15, 1939)

Address to Lajna on the Auspicious Occasion of the *Khilafat* Jubilee

Delivered by Hazrat Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad, Khalifat-ul-Masih II[ra]

A response to the address presented by Lajna Ima'illah Qadian and important advice for women.

At the blessed occasion of the Khilafat Jubilee on December 27, 1939, Hazrat Sayyeda Umme Tahir, General Secretary Lajna Ima'illah Qadian, presented a congratulatory address to Hazrat Khalifat-ul-Masih II[ra] in which she described the invaluable favors Hazrat Khalifat-ul-Masih II[ra] has granted womenfolk.

After reciting *Tashahhud* and *Surah Al-Fatihah*, Hazrat Khalifat-ul-Masih II[ra] delivered the following address in response:

First, I would like to say *Jazakumullah Ahsanal Jaza* [May Allah reward you the choicest reward] for the address delivered on the behalf of Lajna Ima'illah Qadian. Next, I would like them to realize that the work of training women is not done as a favor to anyone but is an obligation from God Almighty laid upon the shoulders of His prophets and their successors. Therefore, the obligations I fulfill which are according to the commandments of God Almighty are not favors upon anyone, rather they are a source of procuring a fortune as a provision for myself in the Hereafter.

The Holy Qur'ān informs us that both men and women are created for only one purpose and that purpose is to attain nearness to Allah Almighty. Allah Almighty intends for men and women to unite together and come before Him with pure hearts and virtuous intentions and to attain the highest level of nearness to Him. The entire Holy Qur'ān is filled with an explanation of this. Therefore, wherever Heaven is referenced, men and women are mentioned together. Although men and women are not mentioned together in

relation to the injunctions, but women are inferred wherever men are mentioned.

The truth is that the Holy Qur'ān is the one and only perfect book, which has established the rights of women. Prior to it, neither the book of [Hazrat] Moses[as] included the complete rights of women, nor did the teachings of [Hazrat] Jesus[as] propose such complete teachings; nor did Hazrat Noah[as], Hazrat Abraham[as], or other prophets mention these subjects in any great detail. Only the Holy Qur'ān has declared to the world that women also harbor the same yearning to progress as men do, and have the same aspirations, the same feelings, that same spirit of sacrifice and same aims as men.

It was the Holy Qur'ān, through which the following declaration resounded throughout the world:

وَلَهُنَّ مِثْلُ الَّذِيْ عَلَيْهِنَّ

"And they (the women) have rights similar to those (of men) over them…"

(Holy Qur'ān, Ch. 2: V. 229)

In other words [the Holy Qur'an is stating that], 'O men! You, who have been exploiting women's rights we now declare that just as you have certain rights over women, women also possess some rights over you. Just as men have the authority, so do women. [If it recognizes this], the world today would take advantage of this knowledge and would not be sliding down the path towards sin. This responsibility falls on you. If you had taught your sons that Islamic *Shariah* has established rights for women and to violate them is a grave sin, then you would currently not be shackled by the chains of slavery.

Thus, this is the teaching of the Holy Qur'ān, and it is the duty of every believer to act upon it and to persuade others to act upon it. It is not a courtesy and I assure you that regarding this issue, there must be no negligence on our part. As long as there exists even one individual who [truly] believes in God Almighty, his effort towards upholding the progress and organization of women will certainly continue because if he is negligent in this regard, then his transgression is not against you [women], but it is against God.

Now however, a section of women are demanding rights which run contrary to the Holy Qur'ān. For example, [they say that] women should become Parliamentarians or should become horse riders. It is obvious that such women cannot morally train children. It is for this reason that in Europe, the mother's lap is not a place of learning and training. Instead, they are sent to nursing homes set up specifically for them. Nannies give the babies milk and feed them and when the children are older, they are sent to boarding schools because their mothers are busy dancing and singing.

However, the reality is that God Almighty has divided human life into two spheres. Just as doctors and lawyers both do good works in their own professions, women are working in their own sphere and men in their own. Thus, the spheres for men and women are separate. However, if it was dictated that everyone must either become a lawyer or a doctor or everyone should become either a blacksmith or a carpenter, then the world's industry would be destroyed. Equality does not necessitate that both men and women should perform the same job, but that on a national level, both are awarded the same portion of responsibility.

Therefore, consider the great responsibility God Almighty has accorded to women, that they do the *tarbiyat* of boys as well as girls. In a way, they have become masters of a whole generation. This truth was affirmed by the Holy Prophet[sa] in the *Hadith* in which he stated that paradise lies under the feet of women. In this way, men have been informed what they can ask a woman to do and what they cannot ask her to do. For example, she is completely independent regarding her wealth. It is strange that Europe, which now proclaims that they gave women respect and freedom, only granted women these rights twenty years ago, whereas Islam accorded women these rights 1350 years ago.

What is required of women is that they should neither adopt the European freedoms nor should they remain submerged in ignorance. For example, some women claim that religion is simply the name given to God's desires and once they realize what God desires, then the husband's wishes should be in concurrence with those desires. In fact, this is completely incorrect, for a husband or a brother or a father

has no authority over a woman regarding religion. When a woman has understood a specific aspect of her faith, it is her right to act upon it accordingly, even if everyone opposes it. She cannot defend herself by claiming that her father or brother or husband did not allow her to do so. God will reply that in matters of truth, I did not make you dependent upon anyone. It is for this reason, that matters of belief are interconnected with the mind and no one can decipher what goes on within another person's brain. Right now, whilst you women sit here perhaps one woman's child is making noise and you are thinking in your heart how imprudent she is, ruining the whole lecture. Yet, she is totally unaware of your thoughts. Thus, God Almighty has made the brain a hidden treasure which cannot come under the rulership of any King, nor any father, son, or teacher. It is as if God Almighty has granted you a chest, in which you can store all your secrets. Even if you live with someone for ten years, they will not know what that box contains unless you yourself reveal that which lies within your mind. It is your own personal trunk. If you wish to tell someone a secret, you can use the key to open that box. If you do not wish to tell them, then you do not open the box.

Thus, God Almighty has given everyone the right to protect their treasure in their own personal trunk. If they wish to share it with someone, they can open the door and if they do not wish to share it, they need not open it. Therefore, God Almighty has handed you the key to your mind, and in the matter of truth, neither your husband nor your brother has any authority over it. There are thousands of women who do not accept the truth even after it has been revealed to them, and they do not accept the faith simply due to the fear of their parents, their husband or someone else.

A woman once came to the Holy Prophet[sa] and said, "O Messenger of Allah! My husband stops me from giving *sadaqa.* Can I give *sadaqa* in secret?" The Holy Prophet[sa] replied, "Yes." Therefore, in such matters a woman has the right to spend from her husband's money without asking him. Thus, be aware of the rights, which God Almighty has granted you and be thankful for the favors He has bestowed upon you, so that you may progress.

Now I would like to refer to the address [which was initially

presented]. A mistake was made, which was that it was not the right of Lajna Qadian to present this address and attribute it only in their name. Lajnaat from outside Qadian also had the right and there was no reason for them to be excluded. Lajna Qadian is not distinct for being special, rather it only holds preeminence because it is located in the headquarters. If they had not put the name of Qadian when mentioning Lajna, then other Lajna would have felt included and inspired. The address would have been presented on behalf of all Lajna.

After this, I would like to turn the attention of the women of the Jama'at towards establishing a Lajna in their own locations and hardworking women should be included within it. Just as the mind cannot speak, a person cannot carry out any work without their hands. If there is a fire and a disabled person is in its path, then although his mind will immediately order him to run, however his feet will not respond. Despite his brain's decision, he will be unable to run. In the same way, if a woman's child falls into a ditch, her mind will instruct her to pull him out, but if she has no hands, she will be unable to pull him out.

Lajna are the arms of this Jama'at and it is very important that they [i.e., the organization of Lajna] should be established in every area. Thus, establish a Lajna in your respective location and make arrangements for your religious education and moral training. There are only twenty-five established Lajna, whereas men have established seven hundred and fifty chapters of their organization. You must stop procrastinating and establish Lajna Ima'illah everywhere.

A New English Woman Convert's Congratulatory Address

Hazrat Khalifat-ul-Masih II's[ra] speech was still in progress when a representative of the English Ahmadi women, a newly converted English woman, Salima, arrived. Hazrat Khalifat-ul-Masih II[ra] very kindly ended his address and gave her the opportunity to present her address. Accordingly, the lady presented her address in English to Hazrat Khalifat-ul-Masih II[ra] and he replied to her in English as well. Afterwards, he said:

This is our newly converted sister, whose name is Salima. She lives in England. I received her telegram this morning that she was coming and that she wished to present her address. She was hoping to arrive by ten o'clock but was unable to arrive on time.

You heard how beautifully she recited *Bismillah* [In the name of Allah]. There are very few of you, who can correctly read *Bismillah* in that way. The British cannot read Arabic. What a shame that a woman from a Christian [background] can recite it so well and you, who are from this country, cannot say it correctly!

I have briefly mentioned some points, which should serve as advice to you, and as today happens to be quite busy, I am unable to address you for too long. Secondly, as women are able to hear the speeches to men through the loudspeaker, it is not necessary to deliver a separate speech. However, as the Holy Prophet[sa] would address women from time to time, I am continuing that tradition, despite the loudspeaker. In keeping with this *Sunnah,* I wish to deliver a brief address today.

After this, Hazrat Khalifat-ul-Masih II[ra] delivered an uninterrupted speech which is written below:

After *Tashahhud and Ta'awwuz,* Hazrat Khalifat-ul-Masih II[ra] recited the following verses of the Holy Qur'ān:

وَ الَّذِيْنَ لَا يَشْهَدُوْنَ الزُّوْرَ ۙ وَ اِذَا مَرُّوْا بِاللَّغْوِ مَرُّوْا كِرَامًا ۝

وَ الَّذِيْنَ اِذَا ذُكِّرُوْا بِاٰيٰتِ رَبِّهِمْ لَمْ يَخِرُّوْا عَلَيْهَا صُمًّا

وَّ عُمْيَانًا ۝

وَ الَّذِيْنَ يَقُوْلُوْنَ رَبَّنَا هَبْ لَنَا مِنْ اَزْوَاجِنَا وَ ذُرِّيّٰتِنَا قُرَّةَ اَعْيُنٍ

وَّ اجْعَلْنَا لِلْمُتَّقِيْنَ اِمَامًا ۝

أُولٰٓئِكَ يُجْزَوْنَ الْغُرْفَةَ بِمَا صَبَرُوْا وَ يُلَقَّوْنَ فِيْهَا تَحِيَّةً

وَّ سَلٰمًا ۝

خٰلِدِيْنَ فِيْهَا ؕ حَسُنَتْ مُسْتَقَرًّا وَّ مُقَامًا ۝

قُلْ مَا يَعْبَؤُا بِكُمْ رَبِّيْ لَوْ لَا دُعَآؤُكُمْ ۚ فَقَدْ كَذَّبْتُمْ فَسَوْفَ

يَكُوْنُ لِزَامًا ۝

After this, he said:

"And those who bear not false witness, and when they pass by anything vain, they pass on with dignity; And those who, when they are reminded of the Signs of their Lord, fall not down thereat deaf and blind; And those who say, 'Our Lord, grant us of our wives and children the delight of our eyes, and make us a model for the righteous.' It is such as will be rewarded with lofty chambers in Paradise, because they were steadfast, and they will be received therein with greeting and peace, abiding therein. Excellent it is as a place of rest and as an abode. Say to the disbelievers, 'But for your prayer to Him my Lord would not care for you. You have indeed rejected the truth, and the punishment of your rejection will now cleave to you.'"

(Holy Qur'ān, Ch. 25: V. 73-78)

Some maladies are more common in one nation than the other. For example, in our country hundreds of murders are committed every year. A man grows the slightest bit angry, and he picks up an axe and cuts off the head of another. Disputes arise over land, marriage, or business deals and murders are committed as a result. Such behavior is rare among women. Compared to the hundreds of men given the death penalty over the course of a year, only one woman may be punished for this crime. However, there are some behaviors which are more common in women. Just as violence is more common in men, telling lies is more common in women. Where

men roam [the Earth] with daggers, women roam around [the Earth] slaying others with their tongues. It was for this reason, that during *Bai'at,* the Holy Prophet[sa] would require women to promise that they would refrain from making false accusations. It appears from this, that Arab women were in the habit of falsely accusing others. Furthermore, the consequences of women lying is that children also pick up this habit. They believe that if our mother lies, why should we not exceed her in telling falsehoods?

There is a well-known tale of two friends, who asked each other to reveal something about their families. One said, "Although circumstances have now changed, we used to be very rich. My grandfather had such a massive stable that whenever there was a famine, all the animals in the city would take refuge in one corner of that stable." The other person replied, "My grandfather had such a pole, that whenever there was drought, he would pierce the clouds with that pole and rain would pour down." The first person grew angry and asked, "Where did your grandfather keep that pole?" The other man replied, "He kept it in your grandfather's stable!" Now, consider what a great lie they both told.

Just a few days ago, I read another story of a dyer's daughter, who entered her school and bumped into a confectioner's daughter, who had also just walked in. The first girl asked the second girl about herself. The confectioner's daughter said, "My father is a high-ranking officer." The first girl said, "My father is a great banker. He lends people money, and we have many houses." She [the dyer's daughter who was claiming to be the daughter of the banker] later went on to invite the other girl [the confectioner's daughter who was claiming to be the daughter of a high-ranking officer] to dinner.

Now this [so-called] banker's daughter had no servants, so she asked her brothers and sisters to act as if they were servants. She set out pastries, ordered *jalebian* [a sweet dish], and ordered dishes from the shops. When the officer's daughter [who was actually the daughter of the confectioner] arrived, the two started chatting. While they were talking to each other, one of the neighbors [of the dyer's daughter] came in and saw the other girl. The neighbor said, "This is our dyer's daughter." The confectioner's daughter replied, [about the

girl she was visiting], “This is the banker’s daughter.” The neighbor asked, “[You think that] she is a banker’s daughter? She is the daughter of the dyer who lives next to us.”

Thus, this whole spectacle was arranged, so that they would appear wealthy before each other.

Therefore, God Almighty tells us in Holy Qur’ān:

وَ الَّذِيۡنَ لَا يَشۡهَدُوۡنَ الزُّوۡرَ ۙ

[“*And those who bear not false witness”*]

(Holy Qur’ān, Ch. 25: V. 73)

The true believer always stays away from falsehood. If a true believer discovers that someone has lied, he will end his friendship with such a person and will cut all ties with him. Although this teaching is for men as well, it is addressed mainly to women. It is for this reason that the promise to refrain from telling falsehoods has been added to the conditions of *Bai‘at*. Earlier, the wordings of the pledge were, ‘I will give precedence to my religion over [all] worldly endeavors,’ but now ‘I shall not lie’ has been added. Therefore, you should commit yourself never to tell a lie.

[To refrain from] lying does not mean that you must tell everyone all your secrets. For example, if a thief’s wife comes to you to discover where you hide your valuables, you can tell her to leave your home, that you will reveal nothing. This is not lying. However, it would be lying if you hide your valuables in one place and then tell her that they are in another place. Thus, today every Ahmadi woman should sit up and listen. This promise [not to lie] is included within her pledge and if she lies, she will find herself having broken the pledge of allegiance.

وَ اِذَا مَرُّوۡا بِاللَّغۡوِ مَرُّوۡا كِرَامًا ۝

“…and when they pass by anything vain, they pass on with dignity…”

(Holy Qur’ān Ch. 25: V. 73)

[This verse] mentions another attribute of a believer, which is

that when they see that which is vain, they pay no attention to it. However, it is most unfortunate that women are often attracted to vain things. For example, they will often ask each other, without any reason, about how much they paid for one suit or the other. [They will ask about] where they purchased a piece of jewelry and so they do not rest until they find out its entire history.

The Promised Messiah[as] would relate that once a woman arranged for a ring to be made for her. However, nobody paid any attention to the ring. She was so upset that she burnt down her house. When people asked her if anything had been saved from the fire, she replied that nothing had been saved except for the ring. One of the ladies asked her, "When did you have this ring made? It is so beautiful!" She replied, "If you had asked me this earlier, my house would not have been burnt down!"

This habit is not only confined to women but is also found in men. After saying *As-Salamu 'Alaikum* they begin to ask, 'Where did you come from? Where are you going? What do you do? What is your income?' Now, why be so involved in someone else's life? The English never ask each other, 'Where do you work? What is your education? What is your income?' They do not even think to be so intrusive.

In short, the pursuit of vain things is extremely prevalent among women, but God Almighty states that believers are those who do not indulge in vain pursuits. Frankly, can those who are focused on greater things even take the time to consider trivial matters? If you are truly concerned for your religion and you understand that Islam has been thrust in such great peril, then you will be unable to focus on anything else. If your house is on fire, how can you sit in peace? Similarly, in this day and age, when the homes of Muslims are on fire, how can you bear to absorb yourself with gold applique and adornments? Why do you not dedicate this time for the service of Allah's religion and why do you not dedicate this time to acquire religious knowledge? Your hearts are dead, and so while Allah's religion is immersed in turmoil you do not shed tears, but rather you continue to carry on with your useless pursuits. The true believing men and women are:

وَ الَّذِيۡنَ اِذَا ذُكِّرُوۡا بِاٰيٰتِ رَبِّهِمۡ لَمۡ يَخِرُّوۡا عَلَيۡهَا صُمًّا وَّ عُمۡيَانًا ۝

"...those who, when they are reminded of the Signs of their Lord, fall not down deaf and blind thereat."

(Holy Qur'ān, Ch. 25: V. 74)

This verse means, when Allah's commandments and guidance are revealed to them, they do not ignore them, but immediately act upon them and they listen very carefully to Allah's guidance. I have seen men sit and listen for hours, and not one sound comes from them, but women cannot bear to be quiet and after some time, they begin to talk. Frankly, they have no interest in religious matters.

In our country, there is a well-known story of a pious man, who went to the mosque to say his Salāt. The *Imam's* mind was anxious and while leading prayers, the thought of fifteen rupees [local currency] came to mind. On the one hand the people following behind him in the prayer were thinking that he was reciting *Surah Al-Fatihah,* but in truth, the *Imam* was thinking of how he would take those fifteen rupees and go to Delhi and buy different things with it and [invest the money], until he had made a sum of five thousand rupees. When he went into *rukū'*, he thought of how when he had made five thousand rupees, he would go to Bukhara and buy some horses, and then sell them for twenty thousand rupees. He then thought of going back to Delhi and making forty thousand rupees from the twenty thousand. God Almighty disclosed the *Imam's* thoughts to the pious man through a *kashf* [vision] and the man ended his Salāt in congregation and began to say his own prayers.

After finishing the prayer, the *Imam* told this pious man, "You have become a nonbeliever, for if you had been a Muslim, you would have said your prayers in congregation with us." The pious man replied, "I am very weak, and I cannot travel much. You went to Delhi and from there to Bukhara. You bought horses and travelled back to Delhi. I could not keep up with you in this journey, so I took leave from you." The *Imam* was ashamed and apologized to him,

saying, “You are indeed a righteous man.”

Therefore, God Almighty instructs us that true believers pay full attention when remembering Him, but the condition of some of you is such, that as soon as you begin your prayers, you begin to deliberate over the recipe for *shami kebabs* [an Indian dish] or ponder other worldly things. Frankly, many women have this problem. The Promised Messiah[as] once started giving daily lectures to women. One day, someone asked the Promised Messiah[as] to ask them to relate what they have understood. The Promised Messiah[as] asked a woman, who had been attending his lectures for the last fifteen days. She answered, “You were most likely speaking of prayer and fasting, etc.” Upon hearing this, the Promised Messiah[as] stopped giving lectures to women. Thus, women very rarely listen with undivided attention, but God Almighty tells us that a distinct feature of true faith is for you to listen to the Word of God Almighty with full attention.

Then, God Almighty states a characteristic of a true believer is:

وَ الَّذِيْنَ يَقُوْلُوْنَ رَبَّنَا هَبْ لَنَا مِنْ اَزْوَاجِنَا وَ ذُرِّيّٰتِنَا قُرَّةَ اَعْيُنٍ وَّ اجْعَلْنَا لِلْمُتَّقِيْنَ اِمَامًا ۝

“And those who say, Our Lord grant us of our wives and our children the delight of our eyes and make us a model for the righteous.”

(Holy Qur’ān Ch. 25: V. 75)

Allah has endowed the nature of every human being with a desire for greatness. He declares, “We are aware of this characteristic of yours and we also desire you to achieve greatness, but the way to achieve this is to continue to pray that you become an *Imam*.”

This instructs us that a true believer should not be satisfied with small achievements, but should instead, desire to become a leader and *Imam*. Yet, whose *Imam*? [He should become an] *Imam* of the righteous and not of those who are from among the non-righteous.

You might be thinking, how can every person become a leader or *Imam*? Hence, let me inform you that both men and women can be *Imams*. If a man strives to make his wife more knowledgeable and successful, then when she follows him, he has become an *Imam* and she the *mamoom* [follower]. Similarly, if the wife trains her children in the best manner, she will be an *Imam* and her children will be *mamoom*, and your children's good deeds will be ascribed to you. You will be sleeping in your grave but when your children perform morning prayers, the angels will record that this respected woman has performed her morning prayer. You will be sleeping in your grave and the angels will record that this pious woman has performed her *Zuhr* prayer. You will be sleeping in your grave and the angels will record that this pious woman has performed her '*Asr* prayer. When silence blankets every corner, when the stars glimmer [at night], and people sleep, if you have trained your children to perform *Tahajjud* prayers, the angels will record that she has performed her *Tahajjud* prayers. To what great and incredible heights you can reach! Allah says:

أُولَٰئِكَ يُجْزَوْنَ الْغُرْفَةَ بِمَا صَبَرُوا

"It is such as will be rewarded a high place in Paradise because they were steadfast…"

(Holy Qur'ān, Ch. 25: V. 76)

Which means, those people, who perform such good works for God Almighty's sake and who strive to raise pious children, I will bestow upon them the highest of ranks on the Day of Judgment, for they saved their children from theft, lying, deceit, and other similar evils in this world. And just as they spread peace in this world, when they enter Paradise, God Almighty will say, "These are the people, due to whom My other people remained in peace. Go, and bestow peace on them today and have them enter *Darussalaam* [The Abode of Peace]."

خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا ۚ

["*Abiding therein"*]

(Holy Qur'an, Ch. 25: V. 77)

In return, they will live in everlasting Paradise for all time. God Almighty says:

قُلْ مَا يَعْبَؤُا بِكُمْ رَبِّيْ لَوْلَا دُعَآؤُكُمْ ۚ فَقَدْ كَذَّبْتُمْ
فَسَوْفَ يَكُوْنُ لِزَامًا ﴿٧٨﴾

"Say to the disbelievers: 'But for your prayer to Him my Lord would not care for you. You have indeed rejected the truth and the punishment of your rejection will now cleave to you.'"

(Holy Qur'ān Ch. 25: V. 78)

Which means, 'Remember! You are My chosen ones only while you follow My guidance. If you disobey Me, then your God will pay no heed to you, and it will result disastrously for you. You will be disgraced in this world and your children will remain devoid of all blessings.'

What a treacherous punishment and warning this is! How I wish you would understand! How I wish you would improve yourself! How I wish you would pay attention to Allah's warnings and guidance! And how I wish that God may purify your hearts! If your children serve their faith, then you will also have a portion of their good deeds in this world and in the Hereafter.

I pray to God that may He enable you to perform good works, and may He shower His blessings on your homes, *Amīn*.

Women are not a Separate Entity from Men

Address to the Ladies at the Occasion of Jalsa Salana Delivered by Hazrat Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad, Khalifat-ul-Masih II[ra]

December 27, 1940

After the recitation of *Tashahhud*, *Ta'awwuz*, and *Surah Al-Fatihah*, Hazrat Khalifat-ul-Masih II[ra] said:

There is an issue concerning women, which if women heard [advice concerning it] day and night and women and men were told of its importance morning and evening, even then these efforts would fall short due to the need [to focus on that matter] in this day and age. This is because the issue which I refer to has existed for thousands of years. A problem which has existed for thousands of years cannot be tackled in one lecture. Both men and women have been led to believe that women are separate beings from men and as a result, they either ignore them or do not give due importance to the many responsibilities which fall on women's shoulders. The more often the importance of this matter is stressed, the greater will be the benefit for women.

I have observed that this notion has become so widespread that men consider women to be something very different from them and women also believe themselves to be a separate entity from men. Women always take the word *ādamī* [the literal definition is 'from Adam' and is used to denote people, or mistakenly only men] to mean a man. If men are sitting in a gathering and women are asked, "Who is sitting there?" They answer: "*Ādamī.*" Actually, *ādamī* means human beings. Men and women are both Adam's progeny. When women are sitting in a gathering, men will say that no *ādamī* should go in there, because women are sitting inside. Therefore, it appears that two races exist. One belongs to Adam and the other belongs to Satan. If men believe they belong to Adam and women belong to Satan, then how will women make progress? This notion is so widespread that even an educated woman, whether she is a

graduate or *Maulvi Fazl*, she will use the phrase *ādamī* when speaking of men. Even though, regarding humanity, God Almighty has not distinguished between men and women. God Almighty says in the Holy Qur'ān:

يَآيُّهَا النَّاسُ اتَّقُوْا رَبَّكُمُ الَّذِىْ خَلَقَكُمْ مِّنْ نَّفْسٍ
وَّاحِدَةٍ وَّخَلَقَ مِنْهَا زَوْجَهَا وَبَثَّ مِنْهُمَا رِجَالًا كَثِيْرًا
وَّنِسَآءً ۚ وَاتَّقُوا اللّٰهَ الَّذِىْ تَسَآءَلُوْنَ بِهٖ وَالْاَرْحَامَ ؕ
اِنَّ اللّٰهَ كَانَ عَلَيْكُمْ رَقِيْبًا ۝

"O ye people, fear your Lord, Who created you from a single soul and created therefrom its mate, and from them twain spread many men and women; and fear Allah, in whose name you appeal to one another; and fear Him particularly respecting ties of kinship. Verily, Allah watches over you."

(Holy Qur'ān, Ch. 4: V. 2)

He said, "O men and women! Let us relate to you this knowledge and remember it well. You will often go through trials." Sometimes, a woman's child or husband becomes ill; sometimes one goes into debt; sometimes neighbors become enemies; sometimes your business suffers a loss; sometimes a lawsuit is filed against you. When these situations arise, you become very anxious, and you look all around you to find some escape. Some look towards their friends, some attempt to find a lawyer, or some seek help from their relatives. God Almighty says, "Why do you suffer in this way? Let us show you an easy way out and that is:

اتَّقُوْا رَبَّكُمُ

"Fear your Lord."

(Holy Qur'ān, Ch. 4: V. 2)

Why do you not take Allah as your shield during this time of tribulation?" A young child has little understanding, but even he runs to his mother when he is in trouble. Yet, look at adults. Some run to

the east, some to the west, others to the north, and still others to the south, resulting in confusion. God Almighty then says, "O humans, when you were young children and lacked understanding, you ran toward your mother. Now, when you are grown, why do you not run towards your God Who created you? As a child, you were not aware of God, but now you have matured. Why do you believe that your mother can protect you, but God cannot?"

اتَّقُوْا رَبَّكُمُ الَّذِیْ خَلَقَكُمْ

"Fear your Lord who has created you."
(Holy Qur'ān, Ch. 4: V. 2)

This means, 'When the time of trial is upon you, take your Lord as your shield.' He has created you from one soul. One soul implies the union of man and woman. Some people interpret it to mean Adam and Eve, because they believe that Eve was created from Adam's rib**.** If Eve was indeed born from Adam's rib, then what was the purpose of making women undergo the pain of childbirth? A child could have always been born from a man's ribs**.** Thus, *Nafse wahida* [one soul] means that a man and woman are the same being. A similar example of this is mentioned in the Holy Qur'ān regarding the companions of Hazrat Moses[as], who said:

لَنْ نَّصْبِرَ عَلٰى طَعَامٍ وَّاحِدٍ

"Surely, we will not remain content with one kind of food…"
(Holy Qur'ān, Ch. 2: V. 62)

Which means, 'O Moses, we cannot be content with just one meal,' even though they were given both manna and quails to eat. However, as they used to eat the two together, they referred to them as one meal.

A mother loves her child, but he is not born from her ribs. Similarly, there is a love between male and female elements. A crane is a bird which loves its companion so dearly, that if one dies, the other will starve itself to death. Therefore, God Almighty has placed the essence of love in nature. Just as He has instilled love between

the male and female, similarly, He has instituted love between man and woman. God Almighty says that man and woman are *Nafse wahida*. He then goes on to say:

وَّ خَلَقَ مِنۡهَا زَوۡجَهَا

[*"...and created therefrom its mate..."*]
(Holy Qur'ān, Ch. 4: V. 2)

Which means, 'He has created his spouse from the same species.' A man belongs to the species of woman and a woman belongs to the species of man. What is meant by "*minha*" is "*min nafsiha.*" In other words, a woman's spouse is a man, and a man's spouse is a woman. A man is the same form as a woman and a woman is the same form as a man. This verse mentions that the 'spouse of a woman' is a man, while the 'spouse of a man' is a woman. This is similar to how we refer to a pair of shoes. When we have one shoe, we ask, 'Where is its pair?'

وَ بَثَّ مِنۡهُمَا رِجَالًا كَثِيۡرًا وَّنِسَآءً ۚ

[*"And from them twain spread many men and women"*]
(Holy Qur'ān, Ch. 4: V. 2)

Then from every man and woman, offspring were created.
[Allah says in the Holy Qur'ān]:

وَ اتَّقُوا اللّٰهَ الَّذِىۡ تَسَآءَلُوۡنَ بِهٖ وَ الۡاَرۡحَامَ ؕ

"And fear Allah, in whose name you appeal to one another; and fear Him particularly respecting ties of relationship."
(Holy Qur'ān, Ch. 4: V. 2)

Certainly, take care of your parents, but do not forget your God, for your parents gave you life for a short time, while God has given you everlasting life. Similarly, take care of your relatives, but take care to remember Him, whose bond with you is the greatest.

اِنَّ اللّٰهَ كَانَ عَلَيۡكُمۡ رَقِيۡبًا ۝

[*"Verily Allah watches over you"*]
(Holy Qur'ān, Ch. 4: V. 2)

[Which means,] just as a mother watches over her child, He watches over you.

Therefore, it is wrong to entertain the notion that a man and a woman are two completely different species. Just as a man is a human being, so is a woman. Yes, their functions are different. A woman gives birth and nourishes the child, and the man is the breadwinner and provides for the children. It has never crossed my mind that this distinction between each function would be something which would degrade the status of women. This difference in duties can be found among men as well. I am a *Khalifa*, but not every man is a *Khalifa*, and my being a *Khalifa* does not exclude the rest of the Ahmadi men from being considered part of the male species. Does your species change because you come from different tribes?

In a typical family, children grow up to become a clerk, teacher, or a land registrar. Usually, the father and son have different professions. A registrar is still considered a man, a doctor is considered a man, and a tradesman is considered a man. Similarly, among women, there are laundresses and hairdressers. Now a laundress is still a woman and so is a hairdresser. Being a laundress or a hairdresser does not negate their womanhood. In the same way, there is a servant and a master. Thus, the difference in professions does not change one's species. Men go into varied professions, just as women adopt varied roles. They are both *ādamī*, only their roles are different.

If women truly comprehend this point, they will be able to safeguard their own rights. If they believe themselves to be *ādamī* and men also consider them to be *ādamī*, then no one will suppress the other's rights. There is no doubt that men and women have separate roles to perform, but God Almighty has assigned no differentiation between them regarding their faith. The most important belief is:

وَاعْبُدُوا اللّٰهَ وَلَا تُشْرِكُوْا بِهٖ شَيْئًا

"Worship Allah and do not associate partners with Him."
(Holy Qur'ān, Ch. 4: V. 37)

Is this commandment only for men and not for women? The same goes for believing in angels. Just as men are required to believe in angels, women are required to do the same. The third point is to believe in revelation, or God Almighty's revealed books. Prophets have never said, 'O men! Do this.' Rather, they always said, 'O men and women! Do this.' Additionally, after the advent of the Holy Prophet[sa], he would always say, "O men and women! Do this work." In fact, the first person to believe in the Holy Prophet[sa] was a woman. When he[sa] received his first revelation, he[sa] was very worried. He spoke anxiously to Hazrat Khadijah[ra], the Mother of the Faithful, and said, "How will I accomplish this great task? I am growing quite anxious." Hazrat Khadijah[ra] replied:

كَلَّآ وَاللّٰهِ لَا يُخْزِيْكَ اللّٰهُ اَبَدًا

"By God, God Almighty will never let you fail. How is it possible for Him to disgrace you after assigning you such a grand mission! You are kind to your guests, and you treat your relatives well. He will certainly help you." Thus, the first person to accept the Holy Prophet[sa] was a woman.

Accordingly, when prophets convey the message of God, they address men and women in the same way. Likewise, both men and women are addressed when revealing the issues of Divine Decree. The belief in [the concept of] reward and punishment is incumbent upon women as well as men. If you study our beliefs, you will not find one single belief, which is designated solely for men and not for women.

Next, we come to the realm of 'conduct'. We do not find any distinction here either. For example, the commandment of Salāt is the same for women as it is for men. The same *rak'at* which are prescribed for men are also prescribed for women. Then there is the commandment of Zakat, which is prescribed for women as it is for men. There is also no distinction between the commandment of fasting. During Hajj, everyone stands on an equal plane and the

command to give charity applies equally to both. Thus, the articles of faith are the same and the deeds are the same [for both men and women]. Reflecting upon this, if someone says that women are a different species, how could we believe them?

It is astonishing that although Islam came to establish women's lofty status, today those women who follow this faith regard themselves as worthless and deprive themselves from serving their faith in the best way. Likewise, men are negligent of this crucial responsibility. In a way, both are destroying the human race and bringing disgrace to themselves. The Holy Qur'ān says:

وَ اِذَا الۡمَوۡءٗدَۃُ سُئِلَتۡ ۪

"And when the girl-child buried alive is questioned about."
(Holy Qur'ān, Ch. 81: V. 9)

In other words, they will be asked why they buried their women alive. This suggests that neither men alone nor women alone are responsible for the debasement of women, but both are to blame for it.

Today, when almost every woman considers herself unable to accomplish any great success in life, not only does she bury herself alive, but she buries alive the entire progeny of womankind, just as men used to bury her alive. These are those women whose eyes are open, yet they cannot see. They still breathe, but their hearts are dead. It is the parents - those who gave birth to her - who are primarily responsible for this death. Next, it is her elder brothers and sisters who are to blame for this death. Thirdly, it is the husband, who takes responsibility for her demise, and finally, it is the sons who bring about her end. Together, they have collectively slain her.

If you cultivate a zeal within yourselves, then you will realize that there is no difference whatsoever between man and woman with respect to belief and conduct. There is only one area where men and women differ and that is in the field of *jihad.* Even then, a woman is allowed to give water, dress the wounds, and serve the injured. Once, when Hazrat Bilal's[ra] sister asked the Holy Prophet[sa] about this, he[ra]

said, “Your job is to dress the wounds of the injured and to prepare food, etc.” The Holy Prophet[sa] gave equal shares to men and women in the bounties of war. The underlying wisdom in keeping women away from the battlefield is to preserve their *purdah*. If they were to take part in war, the result would be that they could be taken captive. Therefore, God Almighty has released them from taking part in war and given them the responsibility of dressing wounds. If women were to take part in war, they would certainly be taken captive as well. Thus, women are prohibited from taking part in war in order to protect their dignity and respect. Otherwise, there have been many incidences of women who have confronted great generals. For example, Chand Bibi has proven herself several times. Hazrat Zarrar’s[ra] sister took part in many wars. Once, the Christian army came upon them with such ferocity that the Muslim’s defense faltered. Hazrat Zarrar’s[ra] sister called out to Hind and said, “Hind! Come out. These men are not capable of fighting, so let us fight!” They pulled down their tents and began to strike the men’s horses with the tent poles. Abū Sufyān said to his son, Muawiya, “These women’s swords are more brutal than the Christian’s. I would prefer to be killed, rather than to retreat.” Thereupon, the men went back to the battlefield. Therefore, a woman can surely fight, but since there is the risk that she might be taken captive Islam cannot tolerate that a Muslim woman could fall into the hands of others.

Finally, there is another matter besides war, in which a distinction has been established and that is that a man can be a prophet, but a woman cannot. However, a woman can certainly attain the rank of *Siddiq*, which is only second to prophethood. You must know that Hazrat Abu Bakr[ra] is also called Abu Bakr *Siddiq*[ra]. Likewise, we say Maryam Siddiqa[ra] and A’ishah[ra] Siddiqa. In other words, God Almighty has given the same rank to women He has given to men. In the same way, women can attain the rank of *Shuhada* [martyrs]. A woman who dies due to labor pains would be considered *Shaheed*, for she has helped to propagate the human race. Similarly, she can also attain the rank of *Saleh* [righteous]. Only the rank of prophethood is unattainable by women, but a woman can certainly receive her share in the reward of heaven granted to a Prophet. Thus, God Almighty refers to this truth in the Holy Qur’ān, declaring:

اَلَّذِيْنَ يَحْمِلُوْنَ الْعَرْشَ وَمَنْ حَوْلَهٗ يُسَبِّحُوْنَ بِحَمْدِ رَبِّهِمْ
وَيُؤْمِنُوْنَ بِهٖ وَيَسْتَغْفِرُوْنَ لِلَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا ۚ رَبَّنَا وَسِعْتَ كُلَّ
شَيْءٍ رَّحْمَةً وَّعِلْمًا فَاغْفِرْ لِلَّذِيْنَ تَابُوْا وَاتَّبَعُوْا سَبِيْلَكَ
وَقِهِمْ عَذَابَ الْجَحِيْمِ ۝

"Those who bear the Throne and those who are around it, glorify their Lord with His praise and believe in Him, and ask forgiveness for those who believe, saying, 'Our Lord, Thou dost comprehend all things in Thy mercy and knowledge. So forgive those who repent and follow Thy way, and protect them from the punishment of Hell.'"

(Holy Qur'ān, Ch. 40: V. 8)

It is said that angels bear the throne of God. They praise and glorify Him. They also pray for believing men and believing women, 'O Lord, You are All-Knowing, we beg of You to save those believers who have repented their sins, from the punishment of Hell. And O our Lord, admit all the believing men and believing women to the Paradise which You have promised them. And if a woman achieves a higher rank, then admit her husband to that rank, and if a man achieves a higher rank, then admit his wife to that rank. Likewise, admit the children along with their father, and admit the parents along with their children. *Innaka antal azeezul hakeem*. You are the Most Mighty and the Most Wise.'

Let us now ask ourselves, whether this prayer has been accepted or not. In this regard, we find the following verses in the Holy Qur'ān:

جَنّٰتُ عَدْنٍ يَّدْخُلُوْنَهَا وَمَنْ صَلَحَ مِنْ اٰبَآئِهِمْ وَاَزْوَاجِهِمْ
وَذُرِّيّٰتِهِمْ وَالْمَلٰٓئِكَةُ يَدْخُلُوْنَ عَلَيْهِمْ مِّنْ كُلِّ بَابٍ ۝
سَلٰمٌ عَلَيْكُمْ بِمَا صَبَرْتُمْ فَنِعْمَ عُقْبَى الدَّارِ ۝

"Gardens of Eternity. They shall enter them and also those who are righteous from among their fathers, and their wives and their children. And angels shall enter unto them from every gate, saying 'Peace be unto you, because you were steadfast; behold, how excellent is the reward of the final Abode!"

(Holy Qur'ān, Ch. 13: V. 24-25)

[These verses indicate] that believers will attain everlasting Paradise, and We [God] have accepted the prayers of the angels. And We will join those people of high rank with their relatives, even if they are believers of a lower rank. Their fathers, grandfathers, and wives will all enjoy an elevated status. And every day, angels will arrive at their doorstep to visit these families, and they will say, 'Our Lord sends you *Salaam*, because on Earth you suffered so greatly for His sake. Now after death you have come into My sanctuary.'

We come to know from these verses that the angel's prayers were answered and God Almighty has decreed that the parents, grandparents, children, and the spouses of believers of higher rank will be gathered together with them in paradise. And when God Almighty has decided this, then women have been granted all privileges because although Moses[as] was a prophet and his wife was not, yet she will certainly receive the same rewards in Paradise. Likewise, the Holy Prophet[sa] was the greatest of all the prophets and his will be the most exalted status in Paradise, but his eleven wives will also be there with him[sa].

In short, there is no difference between men and women with respect to belief and conduct. Where a differentiation has been made, women are in turn more greatly compensated. If the Holy Prophet[sa] had only one wife, she alone would have enjoyed the rewards with him[sa] in Paradise, but he[sa] had eleven wives and three daughters. Thus, fourteen women will enjoy those very rewards the Holy Prophet[sa] will be granted in heaven.

Therefore, you must give up the idea that a woman is unable to accomplish anything. Today, I wish to say, 'O Ahmadi women! You must change your way of thinking. *Ādamī* denotes a person and you are an *ādamī* in the same way men are.' God Almighty has established the same articles of faith for men and women; and the

same rewards and blessings which are designated for men are designated for women. Thus, when God did not discriminate between men and women, why do you? Until you remove this idea from your heart, you will be unable to accomplish anything. When someone believes himself to be dead [ineffective], then essentially, he dies [fails]. When someone believes he can succeed, then he truly succeeds.

Men are fulfilling the responsibilities which fall upon them. Male branches [of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community] can be found all over Punjab, whereas Lajna Ima'illah is not established across Punjab; rather it has been instituted in very few places. Hence, first, change your way of thinking and recognize that God Almighty has created you to serve your faith. It is the duty of every woman to establish Lajna in every village. If you set up a Lajna wherever Ahmadis reside, God Almighty will provide you with the ability to do the work as well. The truth is, that the degree of *tabligh* women can do, men cannot. If women begin *tabligh,* the whole state of the country could be transformed, but very few women turn their attention towards this matter. God Almighty has granted women such weapons, the equal of which men cannot match, but she is negligent, and she reasons that perhaps on the Day of Judgment, 'My husband will be granted paradise, but I will go to hell, for I cannot accomplish anything.' Hence, you must understand your responsibilities. Establish Lajna everywhere. Write to the *Markaz*. If you do not get a response, then write to me. Write articles in *Misbah* [the women's magazine]. Those women who are educated, should do this work individually in their own areas and establish a Lajna everywhere. May God Almighty grant you the capacity to succeed in this work, in order that you too receive the same rewards ordained for believers.

(*Misbah,* January 1941)

Address to the Ladies at the Occasion of Jalsa Salana

Delivered by Hazrat Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad, Khalifat-ul-Masih II[ra]

December 27, 1941

The address which Hazrat Khalifat-ul-Masih II[ra] delivered to the ladies of Jama'at-e-Ahmadiyya at Jalsa Salana was as usual, noted by Mohtarma [Respected] Amtul Salam, Nusrat Girl's School. It is being published with a note of thanks to her. It is important to mention that as she is not a professional at taking notes at speed, the speech may not have been noted down in its entirety. Yet, her efforts are praiseworthy and may God reward her for her hard work. (Editor, *Misbah*)

After the recitation of *Tashahhud, Ta'awwuz,* and *Surah Al-Fatihah*, Hazrat Khalifat-ul-Masih II[ra] recited the following Qur'ānic verses:

وَ اُدۡخِلَ الَّذِیۡنَ اٰمَنُوۡا وَ عَمِلُوا الصّٰلِحٰتِ جَنّٰتٍ تَجۡرِیۡ مِنۡ تَحۡتِهَا
الۡاَنۡهٰرُ خٰلِدِیۡنَ فِیۡهَا بِاِذۡنِ رَبِّهِمۡ ؕ تَحِیَّتُهُمۡ فِیۡهَا سَلٰمٌ ۚ
اَلَمۡ تَرَ کَیۡفَ ضَرَبَ اللّٰهُ مَثَلًا کَلِمَةً طَیِّبَةً کَشَجَرَةٍ ۢ طَیِّبَةٍ اَصۡلُهَا
ثَابِتٌ وَّ فَرۡعُهَا فِی السَّمَآءِ ۙ تُؤۡتِیۡۤ اُکُلَهَا کُلَّ حِیۡنٍۭ بِاِذۡنِ
رَبِّهَا ؕ وَ یَضۡرِبُ اللّٰهُ الۡاَمۡثَالَ لِلنَّاسِ لَعَلَّهُمۡ یَتَذَکَّرُوۡنَ ۚ

"And those who believe and act righteously, will be admitted into Gardens through which streams flow, wherein they will abide by the command of their Lord. Their greeting therein will be, 'Peace.'

Dost thou not see how Allah sets forth a parable of a good word? It is like a good tree, whose root is firm and whose branches reach into heaven.

It brings forth its fruit at all times by the command of its Lord. And Allah sets forth similitudes for men that they may reflect."

(Holy Qur'ān, Ch. 14: V. 24-26)

First, I would like to say that in my opinion, my speech in the ladies' session has become redundant. Heretofore, women had their own separate session and men had their own. Now, ladies are able to listen to the speeches I deliver to men via the loudspeaker. Therefore, there is no apparent need to deliver a speech to ladies. Certainly, there are certain issues towards which women's attention should be drawn, but even for that, there is no need for a separate speech every year. If Lajna Ima'illah ever feels the need for me to address a specific subject, they may suggest the topic to me, and I can deliver a speech on that topic. However, regarding the present situation, as my speeches on the men's side have been relayed to the ladies via loudspeaker for the past four years, I find that this will suffice for the women. Unless you argue, that for the last four years, men have been listening to two speeches and we have been listening to one. Therefore, for the next twenty-one years, there should be an additional speech presented to the women to make it even. However, I have not yet decided nor considered this issue. If God Almighty provides the opportunity, I shall reflect upon the issue and whatever decision is made, will be carried out accordingly.

Following this, I would like to say something regarding the verses which I have just recited. In these verses, God Almighty has stated that believing men and believing women will be admitted into Paradise; a Paradise beneath which streams will flow. Today, we have ladies present here from Sargodha, Gujrat, and Lyallpur. Since they live in newly settled areas, they are well aware of what a stream is and what its uses are. However, the streams which flow in heaven will be different from those of Sargodha and Gujrat. For one must take turns when using the water from these streams; even if their pastures are withering away or burning up in flames, they only receive water when it is their turn. Furthermore, some government officials make trouble and block the streams, which then ruins the whole neighborhood. Likewise, if a landowner blocks the water to a stream, he can be imprisoned for one to two years.

That is the state of streams in this world, but God says the streams [in heaven] will flow along the gardens. In other words, they will belong to the dwellers of heaven and no other will be their master or owner. They will be able to partake of the water whenever they wish and:

خٰلِدِيْنَ

[…*they will abide*…]

(Holy Qur'ān Ch. 14: V. 24)

they will continue to reside there.

Where are those who built Sargodha and Lyallpur? [Where are] those who planted the trees, cultivated the land after great difficulty, ploughed the fields while facing hardship? Some of them lived on for two years, some for four years, and eventually, one after another, they all died. Today, they remain unaware of what happened to their lands and what fruits their progeny enjoys. Some of their children drink alcohol and some now gamble, while other's descendants waste their time in cinemas. It is as if all their hard work has been wasted. In comparison, Allah says:

خٰلِدِيْنَ فِيْهَا

[…*wherein they will abide*…]

(Holy Qur'ān Ch. 14: V. 24)

the efforts of those who dwell in Paradise will not be in vain. In fact, they will reap what they have sowed, and they will continue to do so.

Then there is another difference between the streams, gardens, and lands of this world and those of the hereafter. Many people's wealth in this world is haraam [that which is forbidden in Islam]. For example, governments have forcefully seized vast pieces of land from peasants and given them to other people. The true owners starved to death, while others lived off their land in luxury. However, Allah says:

بِاِذۡنِ رَبِّهَا ؕ

[*…by the command of its Lord…*]

(Holy Qur'ān Ch. 14: V. 26)

those lands [in heaven] will not be confiscated lands; rather they will be lawful and will be granted by God. In this world, how many households have been destroyed because the wealth earned by the parent's hard work was wasted away by their children in useless pursuits. Yet, what we receive in the hereafter will be from Allah and its blessing will be everlasting:

تَحِيَّتُهُمۡ فِيۡهَا سَلٰمٌ ۚ

[*Their greeting therein will be 'Peace*.']

(Holy Qur'ān Ch. 14: V. 24)

In our country, people usually say that the root causes of all feuds are land, wealth, or women. Since lands and streams are mentioned here, the question naturally arises as to whether such feuds will exist in heaven, and will those who live in heaven quarrel with one another over fields and continue their feuds? For this reason, Allah tells us that each person who meets another in Heaven, will assure each other that they hold no grudges, that they will not harm each other, but rather will pray that God blesses them with peace. He then says:

اَلَمۡ تَرَ كَيۡفَ ضَرَبَ اللّٰهُ مَثَلًا كَلِمَةً طَيِّبَةً كَشَجَرَةٍ

طَيِّبَةٍ اَصۡلُهَا ثَابِتٌ وَّفَرۡعُهَا فِى السَّمَآءِ ۙ﴿۲۵﴾

تُؤۡتِىۡۤ اُكُلَهَا كُلَّ حِيۡنٍۢ بِاِذۡنِ رَبِّهَا ؕ وَ يَضۡرِبُ اللّٰهُ الۡاَمۡثَالَ

لِلنَّاسِ لَعَلَّهُمۡ يَتَذَكَّرُوۡنَ ۚ

"Dost thou not see how Allah sets forth a parable of a good word? It is like a good tree whose root is firm and whose branches reach into heaven.
It brings forth its fruit at all times by the command of its Lord. And

Allah sets forth similitudes for men that they may reflect."
(Holy Qur'ān, Ch. 14: V. 25-26)

In the beginning of these verses, God Almighty had said that those who believe and are righteous, will enter Paradise. Now on the surface, people declare themselves Muslim and if asked about their faith, they would reply, 'By the grace of God, I am a Muslim.' However, God Almighty declares that solely pronouncing oneself to be a believer does not make a person a believer. You must keep in mind, that having faith in Allah and acting righteously is like a good tree. Just as in this life, a fruit-bearing tree requires care and attention, no *shajr-e-tayyaba* [pure tree] flourishes unless it is watered and taken care of; the forest trees being an exception. Likewise, it is not acceptable for one to merely claim true faith and acknowledge the value of virtuous deeds. Wild trees never bear the highest quality of fruits. The best quality fruit is only produced by the best trees, and the best trees are those which are nurtured by people. Therefore, the most apt metaphor for faith and acts of righteousness is the *shajr-e-tayyaba,* or in other words the tree which is nurtured, not that which grows wild. And this *shajr-e-tayyaba* cannot bear fruit without the water of virtuous deeds. Just as a tree withers away if it is not watered after being planted, it will bear excellent fruit if watered and will remain fruitful for a long time to come. Likewise, do not be content with your verbal declaration of faith, but remember well, *shajr-e-tayyaba* requires water and unless faith is watered with virtuous deeds, it cannot grow to become a *shajr-e-tayyaba*.

Therefore, do not be content with the mere recitation of *Kalima.* Unless you water the tree of '*La ilaha illAllah'* [there is no God but Allah] with acts of righteousness, your tree will not bear fruit, but will wither away instead.

In reality, as trees are of different types, similarly there are as many types of '*La ilaha illAllah'*. Some are good and others are rotten. In the Holy Qur'ān, an example of a *kalima*, which is rotten, is given as:

اِذَا جَآءَكَ الْمُنٰفِقُوْنَ قَالُوْا نَشْهَدُ اِنَّكَ لَرَسُوْلُ اللّٰهِ ۘ
وَاللّٰهُ يَعْلَمُ اِنَّكَ
لَرَسُوْلُهٗ ؕ وَاللّٰهُ يَشْهَدُ اِنَّ الْمُنٰفِقِيْنَ لَكٰذِبُوْنَ ۝٢

"When the Hypocrites come to thee, they say, 'We bear witness that thou art indeed the Messenger of Allah.' And Allah knows that thou art indeed His Messenger, but Allah also bears witness that the Hypocrites are certainly liars."

(Holy Qur'ān, Ch. 63: V. 2)

In other words, the hypocrites come before the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] and say:

نَشْهَدُ اِنَّكَ لَرَسُوْلُ اللّٰهِ ۘ

["*We bear witness that you are the Messenger of Allah*"]

(Holy Qur'ān, Ch. 63: V. 2)

Certainly, God exists, and you are His Prophet.

However, instead of Allah being pleased that they have affirmed the truth at last, God Almighty is already aware that you are the Prophet of Allah. They say that we also bear witness that you are the Messenger of Allah. Now if Allah declares this and they do not, then it is a lie. However, when they have admitted it and Allah has already testified that the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] is His Prophet, then they should have said that they are truthful and that they have affirmed only that which God has already declared. Yet, Allah pronounces these hypocrites to be great liars. Even though you are the Prophet of Allah, and they also claim you to be the Messenger of Allah, they are liars. For their declaration of faith is not *Kalima Tayyiba* [pure word], but rather, it is *Kalima Khabithah* [evil word]. For they do not say this out of true sincerity, but because they are hypocrites.

Then there are those people who sincerely accept their faith, but their faith is weak. Their example is like that of one who sows a mango tree but does not water it or take care of it. The result will be

that the tree will bear mangoes, but the mangoes will be of inferior quality, sour, and few in quantity. Even a donkey takes one whiff of such mangoes and tosses them aside. When these mangoes are taken to market, they are left in the basket with other rotten fruit, and no one buys them. In contrast, the mangoes of superior quality are carefully wrapped in paper and labeled accordingly. Chiefs place order after order for such mangoes and the wealthiest people buy them. However, the rotten mangoes sit in their grimy and dirty baskets, and although the shopkeeper calls out that he is willing to sell whole baskets of these mangoes at very low prices, still nobody buys them. Thus, there are those mangoes which let off the most beautiful fragrance, wafting towards passersby and enfolding them from head to toe, affecting them as if an electric current. And, on the other hand, you would not want your gaze to fall upon the [rotten] mangoes. The same is true for other fruit. There is a time when melons are sold at a high price [because of their sweetness] and at other times, they are full of maggots.

Therefore, Allah says, 'You recite the *Kalima* again and again, but you should understand what you say.' Hazrat Abu Bakr[ra], Hazrat 'Umar[ra], Hazrat 'Uthman[ra], and Hazrat 'Ali[ra] also recited the *Kalima Tayyiba*. If you say that you declare the same *Kalima* as that of [Hazrat] Abu Bakr[ra] and [Hazrat] 'Umar[ra], then you are mistaken, for their *Kalima* was *Kalima Tayyiba*. *Tayyiba* in Arabic means beautiful, fragrant, delightful, and sweet. *Tayyiba* has other meanings as well, but these four qualities are specifically defined within *Tayyiba*. It is not necessary that whatever is beautiful must also be fragrant. There are many people who are good-looking, but their underarms release an odor. There are others whose scent is not distasteful, but one dislikes their looks. There are some who are not ill, but they are illiterate and ill-mannered. There are still others who are beautiful, let off a sweet fragrance, and are learned, but they are not sweet, or in other words, their conversation is not enjoyable. Therefore, *Tayyiba* is that which encompasses all four qualities, or one who is beautiful, fragrant, delightful, and sweet.

Therefore, those who claim to have faith in the *Kalima Tayyiba* should reflect on whether they have all four of these qualities. The first meaning of *Tayyiba* is beautiful. Consider

whether your devotion to faith is beautiful. You verbally claim that you are an Ahmadi, but does your outward appearance reflect that of an Ahmadi? If a mango looked like a *jujube* [Indian date], would people like it? Similarly, if your Salāt is not like that of an Ahmadi, if your fasting is not like that of an Ahmadi, if your zakat is not like that of an Ahmadi, and your Hajj is not like that of an Ahmadi, how can you say that you have understood *Kalima Tayyiba?* No matter how superior in quality the mango is, if it is scarred and shriveled, nobody will buy it. Likewise, if you believe that by simply stating the *Kalima Tayyiba*, your Salāt, your fast, your zakat, your Hajj, and your charity will automatically improve, you are mistaken. Just as no one purchases a blemished mango, your Salāt and fasts will not be accepted. These acts of worship can only be accepted when they are performed according to the conditions laid down by Islam.

The second quality of *Kalima* is one's fragrance. When someone goes to purchase something, he checks its fragrance. If he goes to buy melons, he smells them and hopes that they will smell sweet. The same goes for other fruits. The lovelier the mango, the more fragrant it is. In this way, people not only check the appearance of apples, pomegranates, grapes, and bananas, etc., but they also check its fragrance. Thus, Allah instructs us that since you have embraced your faith, your faith should exude a fragrance. In essence, your neighbors should be able to inhale the fragrance of your good deeds simply by gazing upon you. Then, will they acknowledge that this is a great religion. At first, people will look at your outward appearance to assess whether you pray like a Muslim or not. Suppose a woman calls herself an Ahmadi but does not perform Salāt. Her neighbor will believe that her maulvi was correct when he claimed Ahmadi women do not perform Salāt or that Ahmadis do not uphold Salāt. For non-Ahmadi maulvis have told them that Ahmadis perform a different Salāt and fasting. Thus, a non-Ahmadi woman who does not perform Salāt, opens the gates of hell only for herself; whereas an Ahmadi woman who does not perform Salāt, opens the gates of hell not only for herself, but for the fifty other women who are observing her. This is why Allah says become a *Shajr-e-Tayyiba*. You should be that tree, which is not only beautiful, but is also fragrant. Wherever you go, you should perform Salāt, give alms, keep peace, and perform good deeds so much so, that people will

wonder, “Who is this woman who has come here and performs Salāt so diligently and gives so much charity?” Those non-Ahmadi women will rise up, cursing their maulvis and come to you, drawn into the garden of Ahmadiyyat by your sweet fragrance. Therefore, your Salāt should be so fragrant, and your charity and alms be filled with such a sweet scent that people will inevitably grow contented. When this fragrance emanates from within you, the result will be that people will rush toward you and you will become the source of drawing people towards Ahmadiyyat.

The third meaning of *Tayyiba* is to be delightful, i.e., such a thing which tastes good and that which is relished by one’s taste buds. This quality is necessary in a believer. Suppose that a woman performs Salāt and keeps fasts, yet is found backbiting from dawn till dusk, elaborating on who did what. The effects of her good deeds will fade away. The act [of backbiting] is as filthy as a woman who eats dirt. Mayhap they are mere words, but they are worthless and of no benefit to the listener or to the speaker. However, if she were to say, ‘O my sister, the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] said this, O my sister, Allah commands us to do this. These are the rules concerning Salāt and fasting,’ the listeners will be inspired, and they will delight in her discourse. Therefore, first you must act according to your faith. Secondly, do good to such an extent that your reputation is established among people. Thirdly, speak of that which is beneficial to others.

The fourth meaning of *Tayyiba* is ‘sweet’. This means that your discourse should not only be beneficial to people, but also practical. It should not only be rational but should be so heartwarming that one bonds with you emotionally, and it should be so attractive that one finds their faith through you. Intellectual conversation is enjoyable, but not always captivating. Although poets speak very well, their words lack sweetness. Then there is that person, who relates the words of God in a very eloquent and learned way, his talk is delightful, but he does not always inspire. In comparison, another person speaks in such a manner, which is not only eloquent, but his words move the heart and increase other’s righteousness. His discourse is considered sweet because it impels the heart.

These are the four qualities which must be present in a believer. If you become like this, you will inherit Paradise. What is Paradise? The trees of Paradise are the believers, and the streams of Paradise are their deeds. When they all are gathered together in one place, they will draw everyone's attention to themselves. The difference between this world and the next world is that here the believers remain hidden, but in the next world they will be assembled together, and the world will gaze upon them in amazement, marveling at their magnificence.

When Hazrat Shah Wali-ullah[rh], Hazrat Khawaja Baqi Billah[rh], Hazrat Qutub-ud-Din[rh], Hazrat Khawaja Nizaam-ud-Din[rh], Hazrat Syed Ahmed Brailvi[rh], and the thousands of other saints who have passed away, when they are all gathered in Paradise people will gaze at them in wonder. In this world, [the believers] stand as individual trees, but in the Hereafter, they will form an orchard of trees, bearing the sweetest fruit. Upon witnessing their deeds and faith, people will cry out that no Paradise can be superior to this one. Can a village, where the inhabitants create chaos by telling lies, stealing other's belongings, refusing to feed the hungry, and committing robbery, be called Paradise? In comparison, the greatest Paradise in the hereafter is where all righteousness will be gathered together, and all impiety will be separated.

Women who perform Salāt and men who perform Salāt*;* truthful women and truthful men; women who believe in the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] and men who believe in the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa]; women who believe in the Holy Qur'ān and men who believe in the Holy Qur'ān; women who believe in all the prophets and men who believe in all the prophets; women who serve other people and men who serve other people; women who guard themselves from lying, cheating, and fighting and men who guard themselves from lying, cheating, and fighting. They will be gathered together at one place and who would not hope to reside with them? No doubt, there will be gardens there, but the true meaning of this [verse] is that it will be an abode, where all righteous people will be assembled.

Therefore, I advise you that although you have been taught the

Kalima, it is now up to you to make it pure. People presume for themselves great designations, but mere titles are of no use. Likewise, one does not gain respect by simply reciting the *Kalima;* one gains it by making it pure. When both aspects of the *Kalima* are present, only then does a believer transform into a tree of Paradise. Thus, unless you become a *Kalima Tayyiba*, you cannot become a tree of Paradise. The Holy Qur'ān has given you the simple example of the tree. God Almighty did not direct your attention towards the moon or the sun. He did not present examples of Alexander or Aristotle. He did not pose before you the question of algebra. He did not attempt to raise you up towards the dome of some building. Rather God Almighty presented to you that which each one of you, rather each child has seen. God Almighty declared that He did not take you towards the mountains or rivers, for He asks, "Have you ever seen a tree?" Just as a tree is watered, likewise you should water your faith with charitable deeds. Develop good traits within yourself. When you do this, you will become a tree of Paradise. Just as a nurtured tree bears beautiful, fragrant, delicious, and sweet fruit, nurture your faith to be beautiful, fragrant, delightful, and sweet. When you become such a tree, God Almighty's angels will lift you from wherever you are and will take you to His Paradise, for God pronounces that His garden cannot be complete without such trees.

People transport trees from far off places to plant in their gardens, so that their garden looks beautiful. In this very way, God's angels will retrieve the righteous from each corner of the Earth, so that people cannot say that this or that type of tree is not present in the garden of Allah. What a grand trade the righteous make with God, but how unfortunate that few people pay heed to this agreement.

I now pray that God enables you to grow into a tree of Paradise and that you transform your *Kalima* into *Kalima Tayyiba,* so that by the Grace of Allah you turn into a S*hajr-e-Tayyiba.*

وَآخِرُ دَعْوَاهُمْ أَنِ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ

And in the end, we proclaim that all praise belongs to Allah, Lord of all the worlds.

(*Misbah,* February 1942)

Reform your Practical Life and Establish Lajna Ima'illah Everywhere

Address to the Ladies at the Occasion of Jalsa Salana Delivered by Hazrat Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad, Khalifat-ul-Masih II[ra]

December 26, 1942

After *Tashahhud, Ta'awwuz,* and the recitation of *Surah Al-Fatihah,* Hazrat Khalifat-ul-Masih II[ra] said:

While traveling by car on my way here, I noticed that the roads and marketplaces were full of men while the *Jalsa Gah* is all but deserted. Now that I am here on your side, I find the same. The Qadian Jalsa is a religious obligation. It is a place to seek religious knowledge, not a playground nor a fair where you come to eat. Of three hundred and sixty-five days in a year, you spend three hundred and sixty-two days doing what you please and you come to Qadian for only three days. Yet, you spend even that time wandering about here and there and you believe you have fulfilled your obligation to God? In fact, at this point, the condition of my heart is such that I do not even wish to make a speech. That which I say now, is only because I am forcing myself to do so.

Beware! Lip service does no good. No nation in this world, whether it be religious or worldly, can make progress until their actions concur with their words. The companions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] accomplished more and talked less. The Holy Qur'ān refers to the hypocrites as those who frequently spoke concerning the Prophet Muhammad[sa]. The hypocrites would join in the Holy Prophet's[sa] gatherings and claim, 'We swear upon God that you are a Prophet of God.' The faithful did not swear such oaths. There is no record of the believers swearing such oaths, but the Holy Qur'ān does mention the hypocrites as repeatedly making oaths that the Prophet was the Messenger of Allah, although they were of the liars.

It is essential that women transform themselves. Currently, your condition is that of the dead. Your mental capacities are not yet honed to appreciate knowledge in a conceptual manner, nor do you have the command of your language to express your views clearly. When women come to see me, they expect that I will listen to their stories of distress. This keeps me from performing many important tasks. Out of two hundred men, only ten men will behave in this way, while out of one hundred, ninety women will act in this manner. I postpone a hundred other things in order to listen to them because they are from Jama'at-e-Ahmadiyya, they are in distress and I wish to sympathize and be kind to them, but [due to their manner of prolonging the conversation] they end up wasting time. Women tend to engage in lengthy conversations. For example, they will begin by saying, 'I entered someone's house through the door on the south side of the courtyard. The courtyard was only the length of three to four *charpai* [a traditional Indian bed, made of fibers woven together]. I crossed the courtyard and the porch and then entered the home.'

This type of conversation tells me that there is no real issue worth discussing at all. The biggest need here is that you find something to occupy yourself. Women from farming families are occupied with chores within their households. They are used to working hard. However, women who live in the cities, know nothing except for conversing. Wealthy women spend their time cursing their servants. The entire day passes in this absurdity. They spend five minutes yelling at the servant because he did not clean a cup, whereas they could have cleaned it themselves in only one minute.

Some people climb the Qutub Minar [a tourist attraction in Pakistan, which has high minarets] for two minutes in order to etch their names, to say that the son of so and so came here on such and such day. They cannot bear to think of simply going up for two minutes and returning. Rather they deem it necessary to leave a mark. Minart-ul-Masih is a sacred place, but some ignorant folks go up there and carve their names. On the contrary, you dare to live in God's world for some fifty to sixty years and yet, you do not exert yourself to leave a memorable mark on this world. Would you say that your mother, your paternal grandmother, or maternal

grandmother have left an indelible impression upon this world for you? In the Bible, it says, 'O Adam! The punishment for your sin is that your daughter will love her husband rather than loving you and that your son will love his wife rather than loving you.'

A man comes to ask leave of his father, saying he has received a letter that his child is ill, and he must go. His father, understanding of his feelings, grants him permission. The truth is, if he was truly grateful, he would not leave his mother and father. Instead, he would allow his wife and children to die, but he would never leave his parents.

That which you regard in this world as your legacy, may not be considered as such, but in actuality may be the grounds for erasing your legacy. The only thing which remains behind is your virtuous deeds. That which you do for Allah's sake, will last forever. Where is the progeny of Hazrat Abu Hurairah[ra]? Where are his houses? For although we do not know who his descendants are, where his houses may be, what his inheritance was, yet when we say his name, we say *Hazrat* Abu Hurairah[ra] with respect. A few days ago, an Arab visited me and told me that he was a descendent of Hazrat Bilal[ra]. I do not know if he told the truth or a lie, but at that moment, I wished to cleave to him solely because he was from among the progeny of that man, who called the *Adhān* in the Holy Prophet's[sa] mosque. Today, where is [Hazrat] Bilal's[ra] progeny? Where are his houses? Where are his assets? Yet, the *Adhān* he called out in the Holy Prophet's[sa] mosque still lives and will continue to live for all time. Hence, everything in this world perishes, except for one's deeds. Still, you pay no attention to them.

God Almighty states [in the Holy Qur'an] that He has bound each person's bird to his neck [Bani Isra'il Ch. 17: V. 14]. What is that bird? It is his deeds. If he is pious, then his bird will be pious; if he is evil, then his bird will be evil as well. Therefore, strive to reform your practical life. There must be hundreds of [Lajna] who have attended Jalsa for nearly ten years now, but what have they gained after attending each year?

There are two types of deeds:

1. Personal
2. Collective

Unless you are successful in both deeds, your life cannot be reformed, nor will God Almighty be pleased.

Personal deeds are Salāt, fasting, Hajj, Zakat, and speaking the truth. It is not necessary for there to be twenty or twenty-five other women to help you accomplish these deeds. These are personal actions which concern only one person, not a party of people. These are the type of actions, about which you cannot say, there were no other women with me, therefore I could not say my Salāt, or I could not fast because there was no one else with me to fast. On the Day of Judgment, God Almighty will not leave that person be who says he did not say Salāt because there was no Jama'at, or he did not fast because there was no Jama'at, or he did not pay zakat because there was no Jama'at. On the Day of Judgment, you will be unable to protest that due to the fact that there was no Jama'at, you were unable to perform these deeds. Whether Salāt was neglected, or Hajj was forgotten, these are individual acts which every person can do on their own, whether or not others are around.

The second type of deeds are those performed as a group. These are the actions performed together and they cannot be completed until they are performed as a Jama'at. For example, men are required to pray in congregation, but women are not, although it is preferable for them to do so. However, if a man fails to say his prayers in congregation, even if he says his prayers individually, on the Day of Judgment, he will be found guilty. On the other hand, if you [women] do not pray in congregation, God Almighty will not pronounce you guilty. On the other hand, if you do say congregational prayers, you will surpass the men and He will reward you more than the others. On the contrary, if a man fails to pray in congregation, even though he devotes his time and he prays, his Salāt will be pronounced imperfect in the court of Allah. I am not saying that he will go to Hell. He might have performed other good deeds in such abundance that they have covered up this shortcoming. Allah possesses a measure, and He weighs a person's good deeds in comparison to others. Some bad deeds are such that they alone will take you to Hell. For example, associating others with Allah,

denying the existence of Allah, the rejection of His angels, the refusal to believe in the Day of Judgment, the rejection of prophets, or the disavowal of God's scriptures. These are all vices which on their own will lead you towards hell because these [vices] are huge mountains, and in comparison, your good deeds are a useless measure.

In addition to these, there are other vices which will be compared and measured against good deeds, such as offering Salāt in a lazy manner, backbiting, gossip, etc. These are the vices, which they will be measured against. If there is an abundance of one or another good deed one can go to heaven, but if you deny a Prophet you cannot enter heaven. God Almighty is Merciful and if He wishes, He may forgive all sinners. Otherwise, usually speaking, what is mentioned above is the general rule. Thus, some sins will weigh heavy upon the scale, while others will be measured against your good deeds. If the essence of your acts of righteousness weighs heavier upon the scale, then God Almighty will direct you toward heaven, and if the essence of your vices weighs heavier, then God Almighty will direct you to hell.

Congregational prayers are obligatory for men and if they fail to do so it will be recorded as a sin, and they will be marked down in numbers. If you [women] do not observe congregational prayers it will be no sin, but if you do pray in congregation, you will be rewarded. If you argue that you would like to say prayers in congregation, but you are unable to do so because there is no Jama'at, my response is that if you form the intention to do that which is ordinarily performed with the Jama'at, you will receive the same reward. Since your heart intended to do so, it is through no fault of yours but due to a shortcoming in the system. God Almighty will pronounce her intention to be worthy, the fault lying in her inability to practically carry it out.

God Almighty says that when a man treats another fellow man in a certain manner, it is as if that man has treated Me in the same manner. When he feeds My servants, it is as though he has fed Me. When he builds a house for him, it is as though he has built it for Me, and in return, I will build a better house for him in Paradise.

This also stands true for the moral training of your children. This is a task carried out at the Jama‘at level. You are eager that your child speaks the truth. You tell them day and night, “My child! Speak the truth. My child! Speak the truth,” but how can you accomplish this on your own? Your child goes out to play and he tells his friend, “O brother, do not tell my father that I did not go to school today.” At home, you instruct him to tell the truth. Due to this conflict, at times your training prevails and at other times, his friend’s will prevail. Had the other child’s mother also taught him to only speak the truth, he would have immediately told your child that he could not lie, for his mother had instructed him never to do so. Therefore, the moral training of children can never succeed if not done collectively. Women should gather together, reflect upon the shortcomings of their children, develop a plan, and then collectively pledge to work at removing these shortcomings from their children. It will require mutual cooperation. If every woman encourages her own child to speak the truth, then there will be no child who lies. If there are fifteen children and one among them lies, the other fourteen will refuse to tell that lie because their mother has instructed them not to do so, therefore your child will also begin to tell the truth. Therefore, these are collective virtues, which cannot be accomplished single-handedly.

The same holds true regarding bravery. If our children are weak, then how will they reform themselves or the Jama‘at, for that matter? What will they have to offer in service of their country or the nation? For even if the brave person is bobbed about by others as if he was a ball, he will not give up his work. Abu Dharr Ghaffari[ra] heard that a man from Mecca had claimed prophethood. He sent his brother to inquire into it but when he returned he did not give a satisfactory report. Therefore, he went to Mecca himself. He asked around and the non-believers did not even allow him to contact the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa]. Instead, they told him that there was a person, who used enchantments to separate brother from brother and a wife from her husband. However, he quietly continued his search, roaming the streets of Mecca. Hazrat ‘Ali[ra] saw him on the first, second, and on the third day. He finally stopped him to ask why he was wandering the streets. Hazrat Abu Dharr Ghaffari[ra] replied, “Perhaps even you may be unable to properly assist me, for I am

here for a certain purpose." Yet, Hazrat 'Ali[ra] was from among the believers; therefore, he insisted in his inquiry and Hazrat Abu Dharr Ghaffari[ra] finally told him. Hazrat 'Ali[ra] took him to the Holy Prophet[sa] and he became a Muslim.

The enemies of Islam were quite audacious, often cursing [Islam and the Holy Prophet[sa]] within the Holy Ka'bah. One day when they were cursing, Hazrat Abu Dharr Ghaffari[ra] arrived there. He said, "You curse so freely, but listen well. I bear witness that there is no God but Allah and I bear witness that Muhammad[sa] is His servant and His Messenger." Upon hearing this, the non-believers struck him quite badly. After beating him, they asked him if he dared say it again. Since he was brave at heart, he retorted, "I bear witness that there is no God but Allah and Muhammad is His servant and His Messenger."

This was the standard of their courage and bravery. In the meantime, Hazrat 'Abbās had arrived and he was a Muslim at the time. Someone asked him if he was older or the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa]? He replied that the Holy Prophet[sa] was superior in status, but he [i.e., Hazrat Abbas[ra]] had been born earlier. Consequently, upon arriving he set Hazrat Abu Dharr Ghaffari[ra] free from their hold. Thus, once faith is entrenched within your heart, the brave person stands up everywhere.

Religion requires bravery and worldly affairs also require bravery. Cowardice is ruinous in any situation and valor is good in every case. If the Japanese break into your homes, would you rather have your son scuttle away into the fields so they can freely rob your homes? Or would you rather that he stands at the doorway and fearlessly confronts them at the doorway so that people will exclaim, 'Wow! This young man died, but he saved the women of his household.' Or would you rather that your son hides inside the house, while the enemy drags the women out by their braids? You would certainly prefer the child, who would sacrifice his life to protect his home. One person's fear breeds another person's fear. Fear is contagious. If you have seeded fear within your child's heart, how can you expect him to display bravery? And if you are the only one who teaches him to be brave, but he sees that other children are

afraid, then he will also grow to be fearful.

When the Holy Prophet[sa] went into the Battle of Hunain, there were many new Muslims participating. The arrows began to fly and they took off running. Once they began to flee, the whole Muslim army took off, until only twelve men remained standing with the Holy Prophet[sa]. On the opposite side stood four thousand men, ready to bombard them with arrows. The Muslim army was not timid at heart, nor were they cowards, however they acted in a cowardly manner upon seeing others behave in a cowardly manner. No woman can make her child courageous and brave as long as the other women of the village do not work towards raising their children to be fearless.

Likewise, look at the issue of education. Even the richest person is unable to run a school by himself. On the contrary, the most impoverished of people can come together to establish a splendid college. Here, a school's expenses come to nearly twenty-five to twenty-six thousand rupees. No one person is saddled with this expense, but it is distributed between all of you who earn four rupees and donate one paisa each.

A Jama'at is deemed necessary for group activities, therefore we have enacted a rule that wherever there are Ahmadi women, they should establish a Lajna Ima'illah. Lajna Ima'illah means 'an assembly of Allah's pious maidservants.' It is with deep regret, that I am forced to say that this group is not yet established everywhere. Wherever a Lajna is established, each woman in the area will be a member and every woman must pledge that she will sacrifice her life to spread Allah's religion and that she will give up her life, but she will not tread backwards. Dedicate a day or two per week and instead of gossiping about your neighbors, discuss religion and counsel each other on good deeds.

Time and again, I have drawn your attention to the fact that you cannot work for your nation until you possess the appropriate weapons. Lajna Ima'illah is your weapon. How can you perform group activities without working together? Strive to observe at least one prayer out of the five in congregation. If you pray in

congregation, it is quite possible that its reward will take you to Paradise. Likewise, you should pledge that you will raise your children to be brave, you will teach them to adhere to the truth, you will teach them Salāt and other virtues, which together you decide upon. Assign them a tutor who will teach them religion. You can all work together to accomplish these tasks.

Similarly, come together to read one portion of the Holy Qur'ān with the translation. The magazine, *Misbah*, was launched for the benefit of women. Collect money from all the members, order it, and read it at Jalsa. Likewise, collect money to purchase *Bukhari* or one of the Promised Messiah's[as] books. Do the above in order that you may improve your ability to perform *tabligh*, that you may widen the scope of your knowledge and you are able to take advantage of the opportunity to relay righteous knowledge to others. Similarly, subscribe to the newspaper, *Al-Fazl*, so you remain abreast of the happenings in Qadian. God Almighty has given you this Jama'at, therefore you should take full advantage of it. Hence, by next year, no Jama'at should remain without an established Lajna.

The following tasks are directed to the Lajna:

1. Each one of you should save a small portion of money, according to your means, and collect it to subscribe to the *Misbah.*
2. At least one Salāt should be said in congregation, followed by the translation of a few verses from the Holy Qur'ān.
3. Register your Lajna and request a copy of the constitution from the headquarters.

This year, I greatly stress the importance of following these concrete instructions.

(Afterwards, Hazrat Khalifat-ul-Masih II[ra] led silent prayers).

Address to the Ladies at the Occasion of Jalsa Salana

Delivered by Hazrat Mirza Bashir ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad, Khalifat-ul-Masih II[ra]

1943

After *Tashahhud, Ta'awwuz,* and the recitation of *Surah Al-Fatihah*, Hazrat Khalifat-ul-Masih II[ra] recited *Surah Al-Kauthar:*

اِنَّآ اَعۡطَيۡنٰكَ الۡكَوۡثَرَ ؕ فَصَلِّ لِرَبِّكَ وَ انۡحَرۡ ؕ

اِنَّ شَانِئَكَ هُوَ الۡاَبۡتَرُ ۝

"Surely We have given thee abundance of good;
So pray to thy Lord, and offer sacrifice.
Surely, it is thy enemy who is without issue."

(Holy Qur'ān, Ch. 108: V. 2-4)

Hazrat Khalifat-ul-Masih II[ra] said:

As Jama'at members have been made aware through newspapers, I have been feeling quite poorly since last May, therefore I am unable to speak properly today due to a cough and sore throat. Therefore, today I intend to speak briefly in the women's Jalsa. Likewise, the speech in the men's session will also be shorter as compared to previous years. Now that speeches given on the men's side can also be heard through loudspeakers on the women's side, I do not consider this third speech as truly necessary. Nevertheless, as God Almighty has bestowed both men and women with a natural spirit of competition between them both, therefore in consideration of their feelings, I have come over to speak for a few minutes.

Before I elaborate further concerning this *surah*, I would like to draw the attention of the Jalsa organizers to a complaint I received regarding the fact that the women on the stage are served tea. This is disliked by the other ladies. In my opinion, the sisters sitting on the stage should respect the feelings of their fellow sisters and avoid

making this mistake in the future. If this mistake was made in the past, then it should be avoided in the future. Hunger and thirst are equally felt by those sitting on the stage as those seated on the floor. If the women seated on the floor can control their hunger and thirst, despite being squeezed for space and exposed to direct sunlight, then why cannot the women seated on stage do so? However, the unwell are exempt from this rule. One or two women might be ill, but to assume that all [of these women] are ill is incorrect. Only a certain few are unwell here. In this case, if a woman [who is served tea] has heart trouble, then instead of complaining [about her] she should be shown mercy.

Anyhow, the current stage arrangements on the women's side are faulty. My advice is to improve the organization of the stage. No one is given a seat on the men's stage because of their wealth or a high status. The only people seated are either the presidents or secretaries of various Jama'ats. They are expected to go back and relate a summary of these proceedings to their Jama'ats. Other exceptions are non-Ahmadi guests, those who are unwell, or those who are hard of hearing. I believe that the ladies should have a similar system.

The presidents or secretaries of various departments and national officeholders, who oversaw the arrangements, should be given the opportunity to sit on the stage. Non-Ahmadi guests, who took pains to be here, those who are disabled and those unable to sit on the floor for long periods of time, should be allowed to sit on the stage. Similarly, benches should be placed near the back of the Jalsa site for the unwell and disabled. I hope that Lajna will make a note of this and will implement this instruction for next year. Only the Lajna presidents, the secretaries, the unwell, the non-Ahmadi guests, or organizers should be allowed to sit on the stage. Those who do not meet these criteria should sit on the floor in the future.

(At the time, a Jalsa site officer sent a note to Hazrat Khalifat-ul-Masih II[ra] stating that both yesterday and today, no food or tea was served to the ladies sitting on the stage.)

Hazrat Khalifat-ul-Masih II[ra] mentioned that it was good to

hear that food was not served this time, but it was unnecessary to relate this. One should happily tolerate criticism regarding that work, which is carried out for the sake of God Almighty. Those who work for the sake of God Almighty are pleased when criticized instead of growing angry. Hence, criticism should be heard with one ear and let out the other. Nothing should make one happier than to be called names for the sake of God. A true Ahmadi is one who bears criticism for the cause of Allah.

During the time of Hazrat Khalifat-ul-Masih I[ra], one brother initiated a noble scheme. After some time, he was asked how his scheme was working. He said that it does not appear to be too successful. It feels as if Allah does not like it, for no one has cursed or criticized it yet. Thus, if a scheme is initiated for the cause of Allah it is bound to invite criticism and we should not be offended. After some time, the man said, "Congratulations! This scheme is blessed. I have received a letter replete with profanities." Thus, to accept criticism for the sake of Allah is the spirit behind a nation's true progress. To impulsively defend criticism is a sign of one's lack of fortitude.

Maulvi Burhan-ud-Din[ra] was a revered man in the Jama'at. In 1903, the Promised Messiah[as] visited Sialkot. He was welcomed with a grand reception, but at the same time was cursed by his enemies. When the Promised Messiah[as] was returning, people began to throw stones at him. Such a great quantity of stones were thrown that the car windows were rolled up. Poor Maulvi Sahib[ra] was an elderly man and he was seized by these people. At times, they pulled on his beard, punched him, or shoved him. He continued to walk, while exclaiming, "Glory to Allah, how did I become so fortunate?" At last, people put cow dung in his mouth and he said, "Glory to Allah. How was I so fortunate to receive such blessings?" Hence, the criticism a believer encounters in the way of his faith, becomes his source of salvation. He should never fear it.

Hazrat Abu Talha[ra] was a dear companion of the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa]. During the battle of Uhud, when the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] was deserted save a few companions, Hazrat Talha[ra]

stood close by and held his hand aloft before his face. One after another, the enemy's arrows rained down and struck his hand until it was entirely mutilated. Many years later, someone saw his hand and called him 'hand amputee.' Hazrat Abu Talha[ra] replied, "This hand is the source of all blessings for me. When the enemy attacked the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] during the battle of Uhud, I raised this hand to shield his[sa] face from the enemy's arrows. When the arrows pierced me, my hand was dismembered." Someone asked him, "Did you not feel the pain?" He replied, "I did not even let out a sigh. It was painful, but I could not exhale out of fear that it would shake my hand and the arrows would strike the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa]." Therefore, being disgraced or being physically or verbally abused for the sake of Allah leads one to an elevated status.

Now, I would like to briefly mention a few points related to the *surah* I have just recited. God Almighty says in this *surah*: "O Prophet!

إِنَّآ أَعْطَيْنٰكَ الْكَوْثَرَ ط

"Surely, we have bestowed upon thee an abundance of good."
(Holy Qur'ān, Ch. 108: V. 2)

Surely, we have bestowed thee with *Kauthar*. *Kauthar* means an abundance of good or a person who gives charity most generously. Thus, this would mean, 'O Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa], We have given thee an abundance of good, i.e., we have bestowed upon you all possible bounties and blessings of this world. Let us all observe that this *surah* was revealed to the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] when he had very few believers with him. His acquaintances, friends, and those dear to him were all against him. He had many enemies who were so powerful that no one could even imagine that God Almighty would bless him with such great success and prosperity. At this time and in these circumstances, Allah revealed:

إِنَّآ أَعْطَيْنٰكَ الْكَوْثَرَ ط

(Holy Qur'ān, Ch. 108: V. 2)
We have bestowed these blessings upon you in great quantity.

This revelation is from a time when Muslims numbered very few and faced difficulty even when walking through the streets. God Almighty promised the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] during this time that He would grant him abundance and prosperity.

At the time [of this revelation] Hazrat 'Umar[ra] had not yet accepted Islam. One day, he left his home with the intention of killing the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] [Allah forbid]. On the way, someone asked him, "'Umar[ra], where are you going with that sword in your hand?" He replied, "To kill [the Holy Prophet] Muhammad[sa]." The person retorted, "Your brother-in-law and your sister have accepted Islam. Go and murder them first." Hazrat 'Umar[ra] asked, "Is this so?" He turned around and headed to his sister's house. Their door was closed, and they were listening to the recitation of the Holy Qur'ān. Upon arriving, he immediately knocked at the door. They replied, "Wait. Let us open it." Firstly, it was unusual for the door to be locked and then instructing him to wait, was cause for even more suspicion. Hazrat 'Umar[ra] grew even more wary. He asked them why the door had been locked. They replied, "For no reason." Hazrat 'Umar[ra] told them that he had heard their voices [reciting something] and he stepped forward and began to beat his brother in-law. Hazrat 'Umar's[ra] sister could not bear this and out of love for her husband, stepped before her husband and shielded him, saying to Hazrat 'Umar[ra], "If you must beat someone, then beat me. I am your sister. Why do you beat him?" Hazrat 'Umar's[ra] hand was already mid-air and unable to stop, came down upon her face with full force as she stepped before him. Her nose began to bleed.

For a truly brave man, this sight was quite disturbing. His anger vanished at the sight of his sister's blood and he beseeched her, "Forgive me sister. It was a mistake." When he noticed that his sister was still angry, he requested, "Show me what you were listening to." His brother in-law was still afraid, but the Holy Prophet Muhammad's[sa] companion, who had been reciting the Holy Qur'ān [to them], leapt out with excitement, exclaiming, "Is a person such as Hazrat 'Umar[ra] willing to listen to the Holy Qur'ān?" As soon as Hazrat 'Umar[ra] touched the pages of the Holy Qur'ān, his sister snatched it away and said, "Do not let your impure hands touch these

pages. Take a bath before handling this Sacred Book." Ashamed and embarrassed, he took a bath. Afterwards, he recited one verse and his heart melted. The second verse softened it even further. The third verse changed his condition. The fourth altered it even further and by the fifth verse, his condition had been transformed. At the sixth verse, tears began to flow from his eyes. When he finished the *surah,* he quietly stood up and went to see the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa]. His door was also closed, so he knocked accordingly and someone asked, "Who is there?" He replied, "'Umar Bin Al-Khattab." 'Umar[ra] was a brave and fierce warrior of Mecca. Upon hearing his voice, the companions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] exclaimed, "O Messenger of Allah! 'Umar is hostile. Do not open the door." In reply, the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] told them to open the door.

Hazrat Hamza[ra], the Holy Prophet's[sa] uncle was also a very brave soldier. He instructed, "Open the door. I will see to it that 'Umar[ra] does not misbehave." Hazrat 'Umar[ra] entered as if he were guilty of a crime. The Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] inquired, "What has brought you here, 'Umar[ra]?" He replied, "O Prophet of Allah! I come here as your servant." As soon as the companions heard this, they raised the slogan *Allah-o-Akbar* [Allah is great] so loudly that the whole of Mecca resounded with their voices. Muslims were so suppressed at the time that they could not even offer their prayers openly.

In such conditions, Allah said, "O Muhammad[sa]! I will give thee an abundance of everything. Thy religion will be granted such supremacies that thou will be unable to count them. The poor will become so rich that their treasures will be innumerable." How was this promise fulfilled? It was fulfilled at the conquest of Mecca when the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] entered Mecca with ten thousand spiritual followers. Abū Sufyān saw the army from a distance and inquired as to which army this could be. His companions named some tribe of Arabia, but he replied, "No, they could not possibly have such a large army." His companions began to list off all the largest tribes and he replied that none of them had an army so large. Finally, they said that it must be Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa]. Abū Sufyān said, "I just left him at Medina. How could it be Muhammad[sa]?" Thus, the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] had such a

large army that no other Arab tribe possessed its equal in size.

There once was a time when he had made preparations to leave Mecca with only one companion. At that time, God Almighty assured him, "They call you poor and miserable, but I will give you everything in such abundance that you will be unable to tally it."

إِنَّآ أَعْطَيْنٰكَ الْكَوْثَرَ ط

(Holy Qur'ān, Ch. 108: V. 2)

We granted you abundance and blessings and accorded you with the best of the best.

The Holy Qur'ān is also included amongst the abundance of bounties, for all other books in the world pale in significance before it. Thousands of books have been published all over the world. One can find books in India and countless other countries. Although India is a poor country and Punjab is a poor province, their libraries still carry thousands of books. Similarly, there are thousands of libraries scattered throughout the world and they carry hundreds of thousands of volumes. Up till now, tens of millions of books have been written and they have been destroyed. Some of these books contain hundreds of volumes, yet in comparison, the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] was revealed a small book which could easily be memorized by people. However, its light and wisdom have no equal. Each and every word of the Holy Qur'ān carries vast meanings and interpretation. Even the greatest of books pales in insignificance before even one single verse of the Holy Qur'ān. Its language is so lyrical that even the greatest linguists stand in amazement upon hearing it. In Arabia, there were seven famous poets and their poems had been transcribed in gold lettering upon the doors of the *Ka'bah.* One of these poets named *Labeeb*, accepted Islam. Hazrat 'Umar[ra] once invited him to recite a fine couplet. He recited:

الٓمّٓ ۚ ذٰلِكَ الْكِتٰبُ لَا رَيْبَ ۛ فِيْهِ ۚ

"Alif, Laam, Mim. This is a perfect Book; there is no doubt in it;"

(Holy Qur'ān, Ch. 2: V. 2-3)

Hazrat 'Umar[ra] said, "Yet, you are a good poet!" He said, "O *Khalifa* of the Prophet[sa]! Is there any need for another couplet

when the Holy Qur'ān exists? All the poetry in the world remains ineffectual before it."

There happened to be an atheist poet in Arabia. The King was also an atheist. He said to the poet, "You continuously engage in debates with various Muslims. Why do you not write a verse, which could be presented as an equal to their Holy Qur'ān?" The poet said, "We are in need of food for living, consequently we praise people. If you provide us with food, I can write." The King asked him what he required. He said, "I require a garden, serving maids, and everything else which one may require. I will then need respite for six months." The King waited for six months, pleased that in the meantime, a verse was being created to compete with the Muslims. After six months, he asked if it was ready. The poet said, "No!" The King grew furious that after spending thousands on him, it was still not ready. The poet said, "O my King! It was not for lack of effort. You are welcome to come inside and see for yourself." Inside, the King observed a large heap of papers. The poet said, "Whenever I attempted to write something similar to the Holy Qur'ān, my pen would stop. At every step, I felt humiliated and embarrassed."

Therefore, the Holy Qur'ān is a book of such elevated stature, because it holds the answer to all human requirements, and it encompasses all necessary directives. Consequently, God Almighty has made the Holy Qur'ān such a blessing, which discusses all human needs. Allah says:

إِنَّآ أَعْطَيْنٰكَ الْكَوْثَرَ ؕ

(Holy Qur'ān, Ch. 108: V. 2)

We have given you everything in abundance.

When we were children, we would read the story of '*Amar Ayyar* ['Amar the cunning], who possessed a bag, which yielded whatever he desired. When he needed food, it would yield the most succulent delectable [food]. When he needed to fight, it would yield an army, elephants, horses, etc. Granted, this was only a story, but there is no doubt that in reality, the Holy Qur'ān is that bag given to the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa], in which no human need or question,

whether rational or otherwise, is not perfectly answered within it.

The commendation of good deeds, rejection of vices, the relationship between men and women, the directives for war and peace, marriage, business and economy, matters of trade [are all contained within it]. In short, there is nothing you could ask for which the Holy Qur'ān does not give you an answer. The Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] was given such a book, before which nothing else is its equal.

By the grace of God Almighty, I have experienced this, and I challenge anyone to come forward with a question which is not answered by the Holy Qur'ān, but as of yet, not one person has brought forward any such issue. Once, a non-Ahmadi maulvi visited me and demanded that I prove the truth of the Promised Messiah's[as] claim from a verse of the Holy Qur'ān. I said that the truth of his claim could be proven with every verse of the Holy Qur'ān. He said, "Fine! Then prove it with this verse:

وَ مِنَ النَّاسِ مَنۡ یَّقُوۡلُ اٰمَنَّا بِاللّٰہِ

وَ بِالۡیَوۡمِ الۡاٰخِرِ وَ مَا ہُمۡ بِمُؤۡمِنِیۡنَ ۘ

"And of the people there are some who say, 'We believe in Allah, and the Last Day;' while they are not believers at all."

(Holy Qur'ān, Ch. 2: V. 9)

I asked him if this verse applied for all time or if it was only applicable for that time. He replied, "For all time!" I then replied, "What an excellent attestation this is of the truth of the Promised Messiah[as]. God Almighty clearly indicates that even in the presence of the Holy Qur'ān, there will be those who will claim that they believe in the Holy Qur'ān, but they will not be Muslims. If all those born among the followers of Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] were fundamentally righteous, there would be no need for a Prophet. Thus, in this verse, God Almighty reveals that there will always be hypocrites who will call themselves Muslims, but they will not be believers at heart. Therefore, it is imperative that there be someone who would make them the true followers of the Holy Prophet

Muhammad[sa]."

Thus, sometimes God Almighty uses His own enemy to speak the very thing which supports Him. Once, a priest came to the Promised Messiah[as]. A discussion arose around whether Arabic was more concise or English. The Promised Messiah[as] said, "Fine. What is the English translation of the Urdu sentence, '*Mera paani*?'" The priest answered, "My water." Hazrat Sahib[as] replied, "The Arabic word, مائ [my] is sufficient." The priest was embarrassed. Thus, it was Allah's discretion that the Promised Messiah[as] spoke that very word, which proved concise in the Arabic language.

Thus, God Almighty blessed the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] with *Kauthar* [abundance]. Compared to that time, his believers are now born in all the world. It is Allah's might that the followers of the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] are spread throughout the world. Even after all this time has passed, we still sit here and invoke *Durud* [blessings] upon the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa].

The third meaning of 'this age' is "I will send a person who will be very charitable and will distribute charity and alms in abundance." The Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] refers to this age, saying that the Promised Messiah[as] will distribute money among people, but they will reject it. People wrongfully assume that this means gold or silver, but people do not reject gold or silver.

One night, someone gave another person some alms. The person who received the alms happened to be a thief. The thief gave it away, saying how some foolish person handed me this money himself. The next morning, that man made fun of him for giving charity to a thief. The next day, that person gave alms again and it happened to be to a prostitute. People made fun of him again, saying that he gave charity to a woman whose money is spent on obscenity and sinful acts. On the third day, the man once again handed fifty to a hundred rupees to another person, who just happened to be very wealthy. The next morning, there was an uproar around the fact that he had handed a wealthy person alms. What use would he have for that money? Yet, all those people accepted the money, for no one rejects gold or silver.

The bottom line is, that when the *Hadith* states that the Promised Messiah[as] will distribute treasures to the followers of the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa], it means that the Messiah will place the treasures of the Holy Qur'ān before them, but they will hurl them to the side and refuse them. Thus, Allah says:

اِنَّآ اَعۡطَيۡنٰكَ الۡكَوۡثَرَ ؕ

(Holy Qur'ān, Ch. 108: V. 2)

"O Muhammad[sa]! We will bless you among your progeny with a spiritual son, who will be blessed with spiritual knowledge. He will distribute these spiritual treasures to the four corners of the earth, but the ill-fated will reject these treasures."

فَصَلِّ لِرَبِّكَ وَانۡحَرۡ ؕ

"So, pray to thy Lord, and offer sacrifice."

(Holy Qur'ān, Ch. 108: V. 3)

When someone receives blessings, they should sacrifice a great deal and should spend much time in prayer. For many of you, the thought may have crossed your mind, 'What an ill fate we have! We do not have children, we have no property, our husbands do not possess a high status, and we are not very well educated.' Yet, you possess that which even the kings of this world do not have. Hundreds of kings are deprived of this treasure. Their children, their relatives, their honor, every single thing will perish in this world before they die. Angels will whip them, saying, "Away with your souls!"

They will leave that which they possess in this world, but that which you have received through the Promised Messiahas will accompany you in the hereafter. God Almighty has blessed you with the riches of integrity, which will never come to an end. Those, who in this world were positioned as leaders, lords, and rulers, will stand in Hell, hands outstretched, beseeching the believers for a drop of water, but the believers will reply that God has not permitted them to do so.

Therefore, every person who has been blessed with an abundance of virtues has an obligation to keep himself largely occupied in worship.

وَانْحَرْ

[*"...and offer sacrifice"*]

(Holy Qur'ān, Ch. 108: V. 3)

Which means, become someone who is ever increasing in his sacrifice. Allah has blessed you with an abundance of wisdom and there is nothing in this world which compares with it.

There are two things God Almighty asks of you. Offer Salāt in your gratitude, or in other words, be thankful and grateful. And secondly, disseminate these bounties to those who are deprived of them. Strive to reform mankind and bear whatever hardship necessary in order to improve their condition.

Whosoever serves the religion is wealthy. He possesses gold. He possesses silver. And he who is bereft of this [blessing], is poor and destitute. He will suffer a lingering punishment after death.

Therefore, bring about a change within your life. Women show indolence when offering prayers. Worship is a means to deepen the bond between God and His servant. You complain regarding your husbands, that they spend their time outside and there is not enough time to talk to them. However, Allah Himself says, "Come, speak to Me." He is benevolent and beautiful. Can your husband ever love you as much as Allah does? Who could be more fortunate than a believer who has been given *Kauthar* and then given an opportunity to act upon His [Allah's] directives?

Allah continues:

اِنَّ شَانِئَكَ هُوَ الْاَبْتَرُ ۝

"Surely, it is thy enemy who shall be without issue."

(Holy Qur'ān, Ch. 108: V. 4)

This means, 'O Muhammad[sa], Prophet of Allah! Due to this abundance of virtues, the enemy who stands against you will remain

unsuccessful and disappointed.'

Once you attain this level, you will never fear your enemy, for you will triumph. Your enemies have planted their roots, but they will be cut from under them and those who stand against you will be utterly destroyed. The believer who is given *Kauthar* will be glorious. He will be the King of Kings. His every enemy will be dishonored and disgraced.

Once, the King of Iran sent his soldiers to arrest the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa]. The messengers said, "The King of Iran has called for you, therefore you should quietly come with us." The Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] said, "I will reply after three days." For the next three days, the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] prayed. After three days, he said, "Go! Tell your King that my Lord has killed your lord!" [In the meantime, the King's son had murdered him and captured the crown].

Address to the Ladies at the Occasion of Jalsa Salana

Delivered by Hazrat Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad, Khalifat-ul-Masih II[ra]

20 Hijrah 1323

After reciting *Surah Al-Fatihah*, Hazrat Khalifat-ul-Masih II[ra] said:

In this world, the most valuable virtue a person can possess is earnestness. The Holy Qur'ān has called it devotion and faithfulness. In the Holy Qur'ān, God Almighty says:

فَوَيْلٌ لِّلْمُصَلِّيْنَ ۙ

"So, woe to those who pray."
(Holy Qur'ān, Ch. 107: V. 5)

On the one hand, He commands us to perform Salāt and on the other He uses the word 'obliteration' for those who perform Salāt. This word is used for that Salāt which is offered without sincerity. Salāt is a source of union between man and God. If there is lack of sincerity, Salāt cannot be considered a true Salāt in the court of God. Our fasting cannot be considered a true fast if we are not sincere. If we are sincere, then our Hajj is valid, our Zakat and *sadaqa* is valid. If there is no devotion, then there is nothing.

When an actor imitates a King, people do not fear him. However, when a landowner of some acreage appears, people treat him with respect because he is not imitating. Similarly, when a performer acts like a great thief, people do not fear him because it is only a performance. However, people fear even the sight of the casual thief who steals one or two coins cautioning each other to stay alert. When people go to the cinema and watch the lords and wealthy deliver their fabrics to the tailor onscreen, audience members do not go out the next day and deliver their fabric to that same actor to be tailored. Instead, they go to their own ordinary tailor, who charges a nominal amount of money for tailoring, for he is a tailor in real life,

whereas the one mentioned earlier is not. Likewise, people do not go to a doctor's son, although at times, he is given the title of 'doctor' out of courtesy, but the reality is that he is not. Likewise, people would rather go to an ordinary pharmacist for treatment, rather than go to an actor who plays at being a doctor.

Thus, when you are so careful in your worldly affairs, do you not believe that God is careful in His work? If you are one hundred percent conscientious, then God is two hundred percent conscientious. And when you consider yourself so intelligent, do you believe God Almighty to be so foolish (God forbid) to accept your Salāt without any sincerity? To accept your tarnished coins for charity?

The real essence is sincerity. It is impossible to progress without being heartfelt. The real difficulty is that people are far removed from sincerity. In general, women believe in surface-level conversation. Women call themselves Ahmadi, but they harbor all sorts of vices in themselves, whereas we need action and devotion. Without these, progress is impossible. In the present situation, what choice do men have other than either bringing about a pious transformation within their Ahmadi women or leaving them behind? So far, we have not one example where a man has turned apostate, but the woman has refused to do so. Women have also become apostate along with their men, which suggests that women have no faith of their own. Her faith is that which her husband follows. Out of twenty women, at least ten should possess a faith of their own. Their faith is not their own, but the faith of their husbands, fathers or sons. The quality of a whole pot of cooked rice can be judged by a single grain from within it. We have this one sad example before us. Perhaps God Almighty has shown us this apostasy to test the faith of women.

When Abdur Rahman *Misri* [the Egyptian] turned apostate, I thought that perhaps his wife would not turn apostate along with him. She was the daughter of my teacher. She appeared to be a lady of very strong faith. Nevertheless, she too became an apostate along with her husband. Consequently, these sorts of circumstances reveal to us that the kind of sincerity and faith we require of our women

does not exist and without it, progress is impossible. Therefore, I address the Lajna in particular. The Lajna of each neighborhood should organize and within one week gather together all young and old, assess their number, and compel them to join the Lajna membership. For those who refuse to enter [into Lajna Ima'illah], consider them to be non-Ahmadi.

In the beginning, there used to be one main Lajna meeting and it was attended by all members. Gradually indolence grew and work became reduced to neighborhood meetings. Now, it is limited to collecting *chanda* only. I have not received a report for many years now, so I am forced to reach the conclusion that no work is being done. It is for this reason that I have gathered you here today, so I can give you some practical advice. Organize yourselves within one week. Enroll each and every Ahmadi woman in Lajna and from there, gather together and determine your priorities.

Many women do not observe proper *purdah*. Non-Ahmadis and corrupt individuals have congregated here, due to which our reputation is being tarnished. To allow these depraved women into your homes is akin to allowing a strange man in. Once again, it is against *Shariah* for a woman to travel without a male relative [*mehram* – a male relative, i.e., father, brother, husband, or son], but I have come to know that some women travel to Batala and Amritsar without the guardianship of their men. Also, I have forbidden you to watch movies in the cinema. Regardless of this instruction, there are some boys in the neighborhood who have made friends with the railway guards in order to travel to Batala without a ticket and watch movies. Why do the owners of these cinemas allow them to watch a free movie? It is obvious that they have developed friendships with them and every friendship which is developed with a criminal intent is in itself a crime. Had their mothers been watching them, they would never have been able to go.

Additionally, many people in Qadian own a radio and they listen to music. The purpose of the radio is to listen to the news or to academic and literary topics. From today on, if I receive a report that any of you have listened to a song, even if you claim that it was a *na'at* [in praise of the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa]], he or she will be

boycotted. The radio is quite beneficial for listening to academic and literary speeches, the news, literary articles, or dramas without any musical accompaniment. Other than that, neither qawwali [Muslim devotional music] nor *na'at* is permitted. A child runs around naked, belting out the sounds, 'Aaa, Aaa'. The qawwali singers also croon, 'Aaa, Aaa.' If singers chant these notes, you fondly listen to them, but if they showed up naked, you would run far away from them. Thus, the very actions children engage in, singers also engage in when singing their songs.

These preoccupations express a vulgar mentality which could destroy your dignity. It is the Lajna's responsibility to reform them. It was revealed to me, "Islam will prosper if you can reform fifty percent of the women." By indicating such a number, this suggests that reforming even fifty percent would be a great accomplishment.

There is no difference between you and non-Ahmadi women, except that you give your money in *chanda* and they spend their money in the cinemas. Even you have not yet achieved the true spirit of faith. None of the women among you can engage in a scholarly discussion. You are unable to address any gathering. After completing your household chores, the spare time you could have given to God is instead given to these singers and dancers, while listening to the radio. What allotment can you then expect in God's house? How will your next generation grow up to reform others? Who will be responsible for the reformation of the future generations? The Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] instructed you to marry so that your numbers grow and Islam prospers. However, what good is that generation which does not grow up to be soldiers for Islam?

Subsequently, the education you seek is with the intention to obtain a job. If you work, then who will take care of your children? An English education is not bad in itself but the intentions are faulty, and if the intentions are faulty the results will naturally be ruinous. If you tread the wrong path, you will only receive a faulty outcome. When girls are highly educated it is hard to find a match for them, unless they choose not to work and they only acquired an education for the sake of knowledge. If a high school graduate marries a man with an elementary-level schooling, then I will be convinced that she

acquired her education earnestly [for the right reasons].

All these issues pertain to Lajna and they should make the necessary improvements. The secretary for National Lajna should gather reports from all the neighborhoods and report back to me. I am now making it a rule, that at least once a month, or for the time being, once every two months, all the women in Qadian should come together to deliberate upon the shortcomings in their neighborhoods and ways to overcome them. It is the responsibility of the local presidents and their secretaries to invite all women to the meetings. If you invite only fifty percent of the women, then you will be slaying the remaining fifty percent, for they will continue to decline in their devotion. The neighborhood meetings should be held once a fortnight and the meetings for the *markaz* should also be held once a fortnight. Thus, one Friday or Saturday night, meetings should be held at a neighborhood level and the next Saturday, the meeting should be held at the national level. Only by performing this work regularly, will it be beneficial. Do a small amount of work but make it a regular habit. Then continue to further increase in your work.

Take a pledge from every woman that when she leaves her house to attend the meeting, she will not stop by anyone else's home and will complete her work. Thus, no man will be able to comment that women wander around uselessly in other's homes, using the Lajna meeting as an excuse.

(*Al-Fazl* Newspaper, May 24, 1944; Number:120, Volume:32)

Methods for the Religious Education and Moral Training of Women

Delivered by Hazrat Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmood Ahmad Khalifat-ul-Masih II[ra]

Some time ago, Hazrat Khalifat-ul-Masih II[ra] delivered a speech in a gathering concerning the religious education and training of women which is presented below for women to read and implement.

The real method of training is simply for women to thoroughly study that which has been revealed by God Almighty. To this end, women must first and foremost read the Holy Qur'ān. It is my observation that the level of moral training which one can attain by [the acquisition of] knowledge cannot be gained to the same extent by any other means.

Knowledge alone is the single factor, which enables one to implement those behaviors easily and readily, which would otherwise be very difficult to implement, if not impossible. Therefore, in my view, the most advantageous factor for the moral training of women is knowledge and many benefits can be gained from it.

Therefore, the first point is that [acquisition of] knowledge is in itself a means of training a person. Knowledge assists in the development of truthful thinking and the recognition of what is right and what is wrong. Secondly, when a person learns to read and write and God Almighty's blessings are upon them, they are given the opportunity to read the sort of literature which discusses those points that are imperative for a person's moral training. Thus, besides reading the Holy Qur'ān, any books concerning the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa], books written by the Promised Messiah[as], they can also obtain benefit from books of other pious and intellectual persons. Additionally, with knowledge comes an awareness of the existence of various vices and their dreadful consequences. Hence, knowledge allows people to recognize immoral behaviors and the

ramifications of engaging in them. In this way, a person learns to recognize moral behaviors and the reward of doing so. The result is that such a person struggles to save themselves from vice and strives to progress in doing good. Thus, the true means of moral training is by teaching women the Holy Qur'ān and *Hadith*.

The Negligence Shown by the Residents of Qadian in Regard to the Religious Education of Girls

I have reiterated countless times that although men are obliged to learn English for employment purposes, women are not obliged to do so. For the most part, they should mainly concentrate on religious education. It is with much regret that I am forced to say that due attention has still not been paid to this matter. Religious studies classes have been set up to educate girls, but I have noticed that only those girls who were unable to gain admission into college or who have not achieved high marks attend these classes. If this is the attitude of the people of Qadian, then one can accordingly deduce what Jama'ats outside of Qadian are doing. Out of His Grace, God Almighty has provided us with every possible facility for attaining religious education. If they choose to do so, women can very easily attain religious education, but despite the availability of every means possible, the people of Qadian have foregone the opportunity to utilize [this facility] and pay little attention to these religious studies classes.

Assigning Responsibility

The next important issue is the placing of responsibility on women for certain tasks. A person who is assigned a position of responsibility develops the ability to think and deliberate. God Almighty has created the human intellect [in such a way] that the more a person utilizes it, the more he discovers the hidden treasures of knowledge. This is so because God Almighty has embedded the human mind with a secret version of the Holy Qur'ān. For this very reason, the Holy Qur'ān is also called the *Kitab-e-Maknun* [the Hidden Book]. One version of the Qur'ān is that which is evident, and every person owns this physical version of the Holy Qur'ān. However, God Almighty has taken another version of the Holy

Qur'ān and concealed it within the human mind. When one reads the Holy Qur'ān and ponders over its commandments, their true self begins to awaken because of this deliberation, and they reflect upon the ideas [contained within it], recognizing them as the very same ideas they have always believed to be true. People accept the truth for this very reason, for their hearts also recognize the truth of this knowledge. Thus, it is imperative that responsibility be placed upon people to promote their inherent qualities and to reveal these hidden jewels. Whoever is assigned responsibility develops the habit of reflection and when that person begins to deliberate, the message of the Holy Qur'ān buried deep within their mind, reveals its treasures. It is then that the person progresses in their ability to truly comprehend the Holy Qur'ān, while also advancing in their personal knowledge.

The Purpose of Establishing Lajna Ima'illah

It is a grave mistake indeed for Muslims to have failed in placing responsibility upon women; hence leaving their inherent qualities unnurtured. I established Lajna Ima'illah in order to instill a sense of responsibility in women. Consequently, the result is that one is now the president, while another is the secretary, another is designated to collect *chanda*, and someone else is assigned to oversee affairs. Similarly, they hold their own Jalsas, which they themselves organize, in which they present their own speeches, advocate *purdah*, undertake the elimination of disputes and arguments, and gather women in one place to offer prayers in congregation. Likewise, there are many other sorts of religious tasks which women are fulfilling most effectively, as a result of having responsibility placed upon them. By assigning them responsibilities, some women have developed the ability to become judges, some to become auditors, others have developed the ability to carry out administrative work, and still others have cultivated the ability to become teachers.

Thus, a sense of responsibility can also be very effective in the training of women, but very little attention has been paid to this matter so far. So far, Lajna Ima'illah has performed well in Qadian, but it still does not operate in such a way that each and every woman

functions as a part within the system. Yet a great transformation has taken place among women through the establishment of Lajna Ima'illah. There are many women who can do *tabligh* if they are given the opportunity. They can explain their point of view to others and prove themselves to be an example of courage and fearlessness by keeping their emotions under control when required.

Bravery of Ahmadi Women

Some days ago, at the occasion of Jalsa in Delhi, opponents [of the Jama'at] created a commotion and threw stones. The women testified that at the time, while the women from outside [of the Jama'at] who were attending the Jalsa grew anxious and began to sputter, the women of Qadian showed no sign of disquiet and remained seated in silence. In fact, when the non-Ahmadi women grew more agitated, the Ahmadi women of Qadian encircled them completely to protect them, thus exhibiting proof of their bravery. The spirit exhibited by the Ahmadi women was nowhere to be found in the women who were visiting from outside the Jama'at. The reason being, that our women often listen to religious discussions and through Lajna, are given opportunities to participate in religious activities upon different occasions. They understand that growing agitated or panicking does not help, but discipline is the key to success. Consequently, they organized themselves and displayed no anxiety. However, since the other women were not in the habit of exhibiting self-discipline, they panicked; just as in times of difficulty ignorant women display agitation and refuse to solve problems with wisdom. If a thief breaks into someone's home, what would be achieved by panicking? Indeed, if we can organize ourselves in such a way that the thief is apprehended, then this would truly be a source of praise. It is these characteristics which can assist in the training of women. The rest of the reminders and advice can be given at meetings, for it is necessary to galvanize the hidden strengths of women.

Responsibility of Education and Training of Children

When women are trained in this way, then they can be expected to supervise their children when men are out [at work]. The

Holy Prophet[sa] said:

كُلُّكُمْ رَاعٍ وَكُلُّكُمْ مَسْئُولٌ عَنْ رَعِيَّتِهِ

[Each one of you is a guardian and will be questioned regarding his dependents.]

Every individual amongst you is a guardian and they will be asked regarding the dependents for whom they are responsible. They will be asked to what extent they participated in their care and upbringing and whether they fulfilled their obligations. If husbands appoint their wives to oversee their children's etiquette, morals, training, prayers, fasts, and education, then it is guaranteed that women will learn these things themselves and will then teach their children. When a woman is held accountable for this responsibility, she will inevitably ponder over ways to improve [her own] morals and will utilize these methods to improve the morals of her children. Just as [the teachers in] the schools are given educational training and after obtaining a BA or MA, they are conferred a BT degree [degree in teaching], which is actually just one way of offering a higher education to boys. Similarly, if women are advised on how to raise their children, they will be able to fulfill their responsibility in the best manner and will endeavor to perform it with enthusiasm and enjoyment. However, men generally believe that women should not be included in tasks requiring responsibility. Thus, if a woman ventures to offer her opinion, her husband rebukes her and questions her on what she knows of the matter. This not only discourages the woman, but also suppresses those very abilities, which she could have most capably used to successfully fulfill her obligation of moral training.

Those who Deprive Women of their Legitimate Rights

Hence, the best means of moral training for a woman is through education and awakening in her an awareness of her responsibilities. Yet I am sorry to say that even now, this weakness of depriving women of their legitimate rights has been bred within some Ahmadis and still they expect the woman to serve the faith alongside them. In reality, as long as a woman is not accorded her rights, she will continue to hang heavy around the man's neck and

she will never be able to whole-heartedly participate in serving her faith. After all, how cruel is it that while God has placed within a woman the same heart he has placed within a man, accorded her with the same brain He has accorded man, has blessed her with the same abilities He has blessed a man, yet men have chosen to take the position to treat women as if God Almighty has neither placed within them a heart, nor accorded them a mind, nor has He bestowed her with any feelings or emotions.

When a woman is treated with such injustice, one of two possibilities will certainly follow. Either she will become as if a hollow shell, from whom the man will be unable to derive any comfort, or else her inner self will rebel and allege that her religion does not grant her the rights she deserves and [that it] is not worthy of being adopted. She will think, 'How is it possible for God to have placed a heart inside my chest, created emotions and feelings inside of me, instilled in me the capacity for intelligence and discernment, and placed the strength of wisdom inside me, yet He has still given man the option to treat me in any way he desires, whether good or bad? I have not even been given the right to raise an objection regarding his behavior.'

Therefore, a woman will be considered perfectly justified if she rebels after receiving such unfair treatment from men. She will assert that if the Holy Qur'ān presents this teaching, then this Holy Qur'ān is not the book of that God, Who has given me this heart. If according to these teachings, I am not asked to make use of my intellect, then this cannot be the teaching of the same God, Who has bestowed upon me the power to think.

Therefore, she begins to develop feelings against her religion and its teachings. At times, she believes that perhaps this point is wrong, and her religion never instructed it to be this way; that in fact, the man is at fault here. However, at other times it will also occur to her that it is entirely possible that her religion did indeed teach this. The result of this is that, without any [deliberate] intention or pre-conceived notion, she slowly and steadily begins to loathe her religion or at least, she loses her inclination towards her faith.

The overall responsibility for putting women off religion lies solely with the bad example set by these men. Thus, the best way to morally train women is to teach them religious knowledge and to give them all the rights, which have been granted to them by God. For God Almighty says in the Holy Qur'ān, that you have been given some rights over women in the same way that women have been given rights over men. Consequently, women should be accorded their legitimate rights and they should be made to feel that man will never hesitate to grant them the rights which *Shariah* has accorded them.

If women are treated in this way, their moral training will most certainly ensue in the most exceptional way. They will become inspired, for true inspiration does not come from outside, but is created from within. The inner heart can only be motivated when the faculties to think and reflect are developed. As long as the faculty of thought remains dormant within a person and until they can shoulder responsibility for themselves, they cannot progress. These are the factors which are advantageous in a woman's progress and training. Proper moral training is not possible without this.

(Misbah, February 1945)

A Revelation of Glad Tidings

Delivered by Hazrat Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmood Ahmad, Khalifat-ul-Masih II[ra]

April 29, 1944
***Majlis Ilm o Irfan* [a gathering], Qadian**

Secondly, there is a revelation which contains glad tidings. However, there is also an aspect of concern [that comes with it], for a great responsibility has been assigned through this revelation and very few people fulfill this responsibility. Anyhow, tonight I felt as if God Almighty was addressing me, saying, "If you can reform fifty percent of women, Islam will prosper."

Women's moral reformation will play a substantial role in the future victories of Islam. God Almighty has drawn attention to this matter, that if through His acts and bounty, fifty percent of the Jama'at's women are reformed - or perhaps it alludes to the women of Qadian - then the means for Islam's progress will be ensured.

Through this revelation, Jama'at members have been given the responsibility that every one of them should direct their attention to the reformation of women and young girls and they should endeavor to acquire Islamic teachings. They should cultivate Islamic etiquette and the importance of the service to Islam should surge from within them. Reforming fifty percent of the women suggests that fifty percent of men will also be ready to serve Islam, for at times, women themselves stand as obstacles when men wish to make sacrifices. If fifty percent of women are reformed, rather than diverting their men from serving the faith, they will induce and inspire them, saying, "Go! Serve Islam." The result will be then that when fifty percent of women are reformed, fifty percent of men will also be reformed. And if such a spirit of sacrifice develops within the Jama'at, that even half are willing to forego everything for the service of Islam, then according to this revelation, this alone will suffice for the advancement of Islam. By the Grace of God Almighty, those worthy results will begin to manifest themselves.

(*Al-Fazl*, April 29, 1944)

Translations of the Holy Qur'ān into Foreign Languages and Lajna Imai'illah

Delivered by Hazrat Mirza Bashir-ud-din Mahmud Ahmad, Khalifat-ul-Masih II[ra]

"... I hereby announce that I will bear the expense for the translation of the Holy Qur'ān into the Italian language. Of the six remaining translations, I have suggested that the Lajna in India should come together to bear the expense of one translation and this translation should be in the German language, for it was actually the Lajna who intended to build the mosque in Germany…"

"… Women have the right to participate in this task, which is why I have mentioned women. I have mentioned those whose rights were undeniable in this regard… and this *chanda* should be collected by the end of March 1945… I have been told that Lajna Ima'illah will pay for two translations. If this is realized, then the outside Jama'ats will be responsible for only one [remaining] translation…"

(*Misbah,* November 1944, pp. 8-9)

Every Ahmadi Woman is the True Daughter of Eve

Address to the Ladies at Jalsa Salana
Delivered by Hazrat Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad, Khalifat-ul-Masih II[ra]

December 27, 1944

Important Instructions to National Lajna Ima'illah Regarding the Organization of Ahmadi Women:

After recitation of *Surah Al-Fatihah*, Hazrat Khalifat-ul-Masih II[ra] stated:

As speeches can be heard here from the men's Jalsa section and I need to make speeches anyhow, these speeches are given jointly for both women and men. As I stated earlier, there is no need for me to deliver a separate speech on the women's side. However, there are some matters which pertain specifically to women, and it is necessary to draw some points towards women's attention. Therefore, the need could arise for me to deliver a separate speech in the women's Jalsa. Yet in the past years, women have insisted that I deliver a separate speech to them at Jalsa. It is a natural desire for people to wish to claim their right. I cannot ignore their request. However, the condition of my throat is such that I have not even begun to speak, and my voice is hoarse. I wonder whether I will be able to deliver my speeches properly. However, I still wish to mention a few things at the women's Jalsa session, specifically because at this time, there are some matters particularly related to them.

Our revealed Book, the Holy Qur'ān, has been revealed in a language which holds deep meaning, or in other words, every name contains within itself several meanings. In other languages, one name can be substituted for another without affecting the meaning. However, in Arabic, if one name is exchanged for another, its meaning most definitively changes.

For example, take the word اُمّ or [‘*umm*’, meaning ‘mother’]. In the Arabic language, the word ‘*umm*’ actually means ‘foundation’ and ‘purpose’, namely that from which other things emanate or proceed, or that which others direct their attention towards. Now, if some word other than ‘*umm*’ is used for mother in Arabic, then the meaning of the word will change completely. Yet, if in Punjabi or Urdu, another word is used for mother, for example, ‘*paa(n)*’ or ‘*taa(n)*’, it makes no difference. One can say *‘bay – alif – noon’* or *‘thay – alif – noon’* or *‘dal – alif – noon’*, you may infer from it what you will, and it does not affect the meaning in any way. As far as Arabic is concerned, if we change the name, it becomes meaningless. It will become merely a symbol without any meaning, as we have mentioned with the example of ‘*umm*’. If it is replaced with the Arabic word, ‘*kum*’, it will be merely a symbol. It will not contain the meanings which are found in the word ‘*umm*’. A mother is called ‘*umm*’ in Arabic because she is ostensibly the foundation for her children. Secondly, children are dependent upon her to fulfill their needs. Hence, the meaning of ‘*umm’* in the Arabic language is that of a foundation, or that towards which others focus their attention. This is why a mother is called ‘*umm*’, for she is the root and the central source for her children’s training, towards whom her children direct their attention in order to fulfill their needs. If the word ‘*umm*’ is replaced with another word, the meaning of the [new] word will in no way reflect the meaning of the word ‘*umm*’. Only a symbol will remain.

Similarly, the Holy Qur’ān refers to human beings, i.e., men and women, with the word ‘*insaan’* [human]. The word ‘*bani nau*’ gives root to the word ‘*insaan’*. The word ‘*insaan’* also holds a deep meaning. In reality, the word is ‘*insaan’*, which means ‘two loves.’ Thus, this word encompasses both men and women and its meaning implies an entity which exhibits two loves. On the one hand, this word reflects the relationship between God and man and on the other, it reflects the relationship between human beings. The word ‘*insaan’* signifies such an entity who possesses love for both God and his fellow beings. No other being [with this capacity] except for a human, exists in this world.

If longevity is to be found in a human, it can be found in

animals as well. If a human possesses eyesight, other animals possess eyesight as well. If a human has ears, other animals have ears as well. If a human eats and drinks, they [the animals] also eat and drink. If a human possesses the ability to walk and run, so do animals walk and run. Mankind is divided into males and females, as are animals and they procreate and bring up their young just as human beings do. Yet, the one thing which lifts human beings above other animals, and which is not cultivated in other animals, is the love which a human being feels for God. Only within mankind, will you find beings who are immersed in the worship of God Almighty. They are so engrossed in their love for God Almighty that they cannot separate themselves from His threshold for even one minute.

However, this characteristic is not cultivated within animals. That is why animals complete their life in this world and they have no second life after death. Mankind however, is raised again to a new life after death. To reach his eternal life, he treads a new path which at times passes through heaven, and at other times passes through hell. Thus, the word *insaan* means that entity, who possesses two loves. One love is for God Almighty and the other love is for all mankind. Therefore, based solely upon this name [i.e., *insaan*], Islam reveals that the veritable purpose of religion is that it was introduced to the world so that human beings may develop a relationship with God Almighty and it could teach people to feel sympathy and love for mankind. The entire nature of religion is either concerned with developing love for God Almighty or concerned with maintaining a sincere bond with mankind.

What is Salāt? It is an expression of the bond and love between man and God. It is similar to the way in which a mother remembers her child, the way a child remembers their mother, or the way a brother remembers his brother, the way a friend remembers their friend, the way a husband remembers his wife, or the way a wife remembers her husband. Similarly, a righteous person does not forget his God. He thinks of Him many times a day. This is what is known as worship, and this is Salāt. We have witnessed that where there is sincere love, no person can prevent another from remembering the [object of his affection]. No matter how much one counsels a mother to cease thinking of her child, a child to stop remembering their

mother, a friend to resist thinking of another friend, a brother from thinking of his brother, a father to forget his sons or the sons to stop remembering their father, a wife to forget her husband or a husband to cease thinking of his wife, they will never be prepared to forget those whom they love, for their love is sincere and genuine. Yet, it has been observed that among humans, many do not possess the true [spirit of] humanity. They have forgotten their own God and they need to be reminded that a Being created them, He Who is their real Master. If they are made to realize this, they also need to be reminded to keep the remembrance of God Almighty alive within their hearts. They also need to be constantly reminded to strengthen their relationship with God Almighty.

This is a particular weakness in man, which originates from his animal instincts, for man is related to animals through birth. Thus, when the animal instinct takes over, while we may observe that some give preference to God Almighty in every possible way and hold their love for God far and above [their] love for the world, we also see people, who submit to their animalistic nature and forget their love and relationship with God Almighty. Just like animals, they consider life to be nothing more than worldly enjoyment, eating and drinking, rest and relaxation, amassing superior and luxurious items, leisure and travel, and acquisition of worldly pleasures. They have no link to the life hereafter. In fact, the entire scope of their desires is inextricably attached to the life of this world. I am amazed at how each person fears death and strives to save himself from the inevitable, how he spends thousands and millions of rupees to avoid death. If our life is only connected to this world, what reason could he have to fear death? We have seen thousands, actually millions, of people in this life who possess nothing of the grandeur of wealth, comfort, and the rest of the luxuries of this world. Despite this, they still wish to live in this world. The realization of this innate desire of theirs indicates that they have been created to fulfill some higher purpose. If they have not been created for any other essential purpose, then what is it that attracts them toward this world despite their difficulties, urging them to stay alive and flee from death?

It is this very desire and sentiment which God Almighty mentions in the Holy Qur’ān:

وَ مَا خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّ وَ الْاِنْسَ اِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُوْنِ ۝

"And I have not created the jinn and man, but that they may worship Me."

(Holy Qur'ān, Ch. 51: V. 57)

Jinn and man have only been created in order for them to spend their time in the worship of Allah, so as to develop such heavenly eyes in the hereafter, which are capable of seeing God Almighty. God Almighty says in the Holy Qur'ān:

وَ مَنْ كَانَ فِيْ هٰذِهٖٓ اَعْمٰى فَهُوَ فِي الْاٰخِرَةِ اَعْمٰى

وَ اَضَلُّ سَبِيْلًا ۝

"But whoso is blind in this world will be blind in the Hereafter, and even more astray from the way."

(Holy Qur'ān, Ch. 17: V. 73)

A person who is [spiritually] blind in this world and does not possess such heavenly eyesight with which to see God Almighty, will be raised up blind on the Day of Judgment as well. For on the Day of Judgment, his spiritual eyes will be borne from [his own] knowledge of Allah in this world. Thus, a person who did not develop spiritual insight to see God Almighty in this world, will be raised up spiritually blind in the next world as well and will be unable to see God Almighty.

The Holy Qur'ān states that when such people are raised up blind, they will object, "What has happened to us that we cannot see anything?" God Almighty will then reply, "In the previous world you were blind as you did not develop spiritual vision, which should have been developed there. That is why you cannot see Me now."

Upon hearing this, the people will say, "What is the use of this life if we are incapable of seeing You?" The desire to form a bond with God and to achieve eternal life is embedded within man, even if he appears to have forgotten this. This desire deep within him

directs him to continue living. Indeed, it is for this reason that suicide is forbidden in Islam.

If man was created only for the purpose that man may eat and drink, then why is he punished if he commits suicide? It should have been the case that each individual should have decided themselves if he wishes to continue their life [if all this was just for the sake] of food and drink. What possible reason could there be to punish him for leaving this world [if this was only for eating and drinking]?

However, God Almighty created man for one and only one purpose, which is to prepare himself in this world for the next life. If he is lazy or neglectful in preparing for the next world and wastes this time, he is guilty because the time in this world is akin to the period when a student spends his time in school. A student who does not attend class is punished, because he wasted his time of learning and refused to acquire knowledge. Similarly, if someone does not prepare for the next life in this worldly life, he deserves to be punished for he wasted his time.

Thus, God Almighty has drawn our attention within the word, '*insaan'* to the reasoning behind this name, which is to generate two loves and two relationships. First, to love God and develop a relationship with Him and second, to develop a love for and a relationship with mankind. All elements of worship are encompassed within the first point. That is, they all connect back to a love for God Almighty. All other commandments, such as refraining from lying, stealing, indulging in bribery, fraud, and deception, backbiting, engaging in slander, and showing an ill temper, as well as [those to act upon such as] being cheerful, treating others well, respecting elders, taking care of the needy and the poor, being sympathetic towards others, showing justice and equity in all matters, and behaving well towards one's relatives are all components of the relationships between fellow human beings.

Thus, the word *insaan* is the name of that being who possesses two loves and two relationships. One of which is with God and the other with mankind. If these two characteristics are found present in a being, then he is an *insaan*. If these two qualities are not

developed, he is a beast, regardless of whether his appearance is that of a man or not because appearances mean nothing. It is only truth which transforms a man into a man, otherwise mere appearances are like images which have no real existence. An image of an incredibly strong and powerful man can be drawn upon paper, which even a child can rip apart and throw away. If an image of Rustam is drawn upon a piece of paper, a two-year old child can easily tear it up. Accordingly, the person who is devoid of these two human characteristics is no more than an image, for which there is neither respect nor honor in the eyes of God Almighty.

Furthermore, mankind can be divided into two parts. One is titled Adam and the other has been given the name of Hawwa [Eve]. When the word '*Ādamī'* is spoken, this means the child of Adam, be it man or woman. When women wish to frighten children, they use the word '*Hawwa'* to scare them [Hawwa means Eve, however the sound to the word is often used to scare someone]. However, [they do not realize that] they are *Hawwa*. Some elderly women, whose teeth have fallen out and whose backs are bent, can frighten their young children relatives. They believe that if Grandmother *Hawwa* of thousands of years ago was to re-appear, they would certainly run away in fear upon seeing her. Women scare their children by saying "*Hawwa*, *Hawwa*!" Yet, this *Hawwa* is indeed the same Grandmother *Hawwa*, who was Adam's[as] wife.

The name of Adam[as] appears in the Holy Qur'ān while the name of *Hawwa* [Eve] is mentioned in Islamic literature and *Hadith* and so on. These two names of Adam and *Hawwa* are replete with meaning as well. Adam means *the one who lives on this earth and works the fields, engages in business, and travels*. In Arabic:

ادیم الارض [*adimul ardh*]

refers to the earth's ground and Adam[as] is that being who lives upon the earth and earns his living through working the fields. The word *Hawwa* is derived from:

حَویَ یھوِی [*hawwa yahwi*]

which means, *to cover something, to collect something, or to become the owner of something*. As such, *Hawwa* means somebody who gathers children round herself, rules them, and is known as the head

of the household.

Clearly, both these names are full of meaning. It is not certain whether the person we call Adam was actually named Adam, or whether he was called Adam because of the qualities he possessed. [Similarly], we cannot say for sure that the woman mentioned in the *Hadith*, was truly *Hawwa*, or if she was named *Hawwa* simply to illustrate the qualities she possessed. Whatever the case, if these were truly their names, their names reflected the truth; and if these were their attributes, then these [names] were simply their attributes.

Accordingly, Adam means one who works and toils in the fields, ploughs the fields, and makes the land habitable. Likewise, *Hawwa* means she who stays inside the home and cares for her children and is known as the queen of her household. Thus, every woman who still retains these qualities today, or takes care of her household [and] tends to the moral training of her children, is known as *Hawwa*. A decent man who works hard, is industrious, and makes this earth habitable, is an *ādamī* in the truest sense. The ignorant, who sit at home, batting flies and refusing to work hard; or certain wealthy men and those addicted to luxury, who live off their father's and grandfather's earnings and do nothing else, are men only in name. They are not men of worth. For the meaning of Adam is he who goes out to work and makes this world a satisfactory place to live. Similarly, women who do not take due care of their household, who do not attend to the upbringing of their children, do not organize all household necessities, and do not train their children in such a way that the future generation should become pious, righteous, brave, fearless, ready to offer every sacrifice for the sake of their faith, and acquire religious knowledge, are something else entirely. They are daughters of *Hawwa* in name only, not in practice. For they did not gather their children around themselves, nor did they prove themselves to be the true master of the household. And they did not fulfill the obligation upon them as the head of the household, which was to watch out for the best interests of their children and their moral training. They did not discharge their duty of supervising their children, as was made incumbent upon them. Thus, the woman who does not gather her children around herself to provide the means for their betterment and their upbringing, nor does she supervise the

household, is *Hawwa* only in name and not in practice.

If a woman wishes to be known as a true daughter of *Hawwa,* it is her duty to organize the household affairs and train her children correctly. [She should] train them in such a way that her title as head of the household remains warranted. *Malik* [master] means those who are under [her] are obedient to [her]. However, if a woman does not properly train their children, they will be disobedient. A lack of proper training causes children to develop the habit of disobedience, thereby causing the gradual and continual increase in engaging in wrong habits.

It is said that there was a dissolute boy, whose mother loved him with the wrong kind of love. The mother never stopped him from any sort of wrongdoing. She did not stop him when he began stealing tiny things. If anyone complained to his mother, she would defend her son saying he was not like that. It escalated to the point where he began to steal larger and larger things, to the point that he began to kill and plunder. Finally, he was arrested for the crime of murder and was sentenced to death by hanging. As the time of the execution approached, the officer told him, "We can make arrangements to grant you one last request or arrange a meeting with anyone you may wish to meet." He said, "Yes, send for my mother. I wish to see her." Accordingly, the mother was called for. He said to her, "I wish to say something in your ear." When the mother brought her ear close to him, the son bit upon her ear so hard that she cried out in pain. The jailers who were witnessing this scene nearby, shouted out, "O you villain! Within a few minutes, you will step on the threshold of death and yet, you continue to be so vicious. What sort of conduct is this that in your last minutes, you bite off your mother's ear?" He replied, "It is due solely to this mother that I am being hanged today. If she had raised me properly, I too, would be a good person today. However, she did not pay attention to my upbringing when I made mistakes during my childhood. This mother would cover them up. If I stole something from someone and they came after me, she would say, 'My son does not have your [belongings].' Gradually, my morals deteriorated and were distorted until I turned into an evil being, a thief, and a robber. Today, I am to be hanged for these sins."

Thus, a woman is only entitled to be called a daughter of *Hawwa* in the truest sense when she trains her children correctly. She should safeguard their morals and if she neglects to do so, she is not worthy of being known as a daughter of *Hawwa* or the master of her domain. Therefore, it is essential for the daughters of Eve to raise their children in the best manner.

Nations can Acquire Paradise Only Through Mothers

The Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] has said that paradise lies under the feet of mothers. What an exquisite statement and what great prominence the Holy Prophet[sa] accords the mother! People usually interpret this to mean that paradise is gained by being obedient and dutiful to one's mother and this is also true. However, the real import is that a nation can only attain a state of paradise when mothers are righteous and impart the correct moral training to their children. If the mothers are not good and do not properly train their children, the children will never be righteous. This is because those nations whose children are not virtuous, they will never acquire paradise. Consequently, the reality is that nations may only acquire paradise through mothers. The standard with which the nation's mothers raise their children is the very standard in which the nation will create good or inferior work resulting in either a great nation or an inferior one. If mothers properly raise their children, the nation's actions will bring about an excellent outcome and that nation will succeed in its goals. If mothers do not train their children correctly, the actions of that nation will neither generate satisfactory results nor can that nation succeed in achieving its goals. This is exactly why Islam has placed particular emphasis upon educating women.

On one occasion, the Holy Prophet[sa] advised that a man who had three daughters and raised them well and educated them, would be entitled to enter paradise. One of his companions[ra] said, "O Messenger of Allah, what if a man has two daughters instead of three, what then?" The Holy Prophet[sa] answered, "If the man has two daughters and raises them well and educates them, he too will become deserving of paradise." He then went on to say, "If someone has only one daughter and he gives her a good education and proper

training, he will be worthy of entering paradise."

Now, note how much importance the Holy Prophet[sa] has attached to the education of women. The truth is that nothing can progress without the education and proper moral training of women.

God Almighty has revealed to me that if fifty percent of women are reformed, Islam's progress is guaranteed. Hence, God Almighty has forged a direct link between your [women's] reformation and the success of Islam. Unless you reform yourself, no matter what our missionaries may do, it will be of no use. The truth is, that until it is made apparent to the world that Islam accords women with a standing and rank of such superiority that no other nation can compete with Islam in granting them such a status until then, we can never succeed in bringing others into the fold of Islam. This is because a person of another faith will only study the Holy Qur'ān and ponder over it and act upon it after they becomes a Muslim. Yet before they become a Muslim, only our own actions and examples can draw their attention towards Islam. Therefore, the reformation of women is incredibly necessary. In Qadian, an all-out effort is underway to achieve this goal. The opportunities for education are already present here, for a school and a college for religious studies has been already established for girls. However, as I have already explained and reiterated what the Holy Prophet[sa] has stated, paradise lies under the feet of mothers. This task is not within our control. Only you [women] can do this. Unless you work with us and cooperate with us and unless you dedicate your lives for the benefit of Islam, we can achieve nothing.

God Almighty has divided mankind into two parts and imbued distinct emotions into each. Women cannot fully understand men's emotions nor can men fully understand women's emotions. As such, since we are unable to recognize each other's emotions, only men can properly train men and only women can properly train women. We cannot accurately interpret a woman's thought processes. We have emotions which are solely particular to men. Only women can comprehend the sorrows and the needs of other women. Only they can remove their doubts, solve their problems, and guide them towards correct reformation.

This is why the Holy Qur'ān states that the only religion which can be beneficial to mankind is the one which comes from God Almighty. If a human being were to establish a religion and if a man was the founder of that religion, he would only consider the feelings and thoughts of men, being incapable of accurately interpreting the feelings and thoughts of women. If a woman was to be the creator of this religion, she would only be able to take into consideration the feelings and thoughts of women and therefore, be unqualified to accurately understand the feelings and thoughts of men. As such, if there is any being who can bridge the gap which exists between man and woman, it is none other than Allah Almighty Himself and only that religion which comes from Allah Almighty, can be of benefit to the entire world. It is Allah Almighty Himself Who created both men and women and it is He Who is acquainted with the weaknesses of women and of men. [It is only] He Who is cognizant of the good qualities found within women as well as the good qualities found within men; the One Who is familiar with women's capabilities and familiar with men's capabilities; the One Who understands the emotions of women as well as the emotions of men. It is stated in the Holy Qur'ān:

مَرَجَ الْبَحْرَيْنِ يَلْتَقِيٰنِ ۝ بَيْنَهُمَا بَرْزَخٌ لَّا يَبْغِيٰنِ ۝

"He has made the two bodies of water flow. They will one day meet; Between them there is at present a barrier; they cannot encroach one upon the other."

(Holy Qur'ān, Ch. 55: V. 20-21)

There are two bodies of water in this world which flow next to each other, but despite running alongside each other, they do not meet. These two rivers allude to men and women, who live side by side and between them lies love and affection. A sister loves her brother, and a brother loves his sister. A husband loves his wife, and the wife loves her husband, so much so, that at times, they sacrifice their lives for each other. Even so, a woman is a woman, and a man is a man. There exists a barrier between them, and they cannot come together except under the guidance of God Almighty. He is the one and only bond, which mutually unites the two together. Thus, Allah has told me to reform women because I am the *Imam*. However, as I

have previously mentioned, this task cannot be done without your help. It is you who can do this work. It is you who can sow the seeds of the progress of Islam. This task can only be accomplished through you. It is impossible to be successful in this endeavor without your help and cooperation. As such, I am conveying this message to you from God Almighty that if you can reform fifty percent of women, Islam will realize success. Accordingly, it is the responsibility of those women who are passionate about Islam, possess a desire for Islam's progress, and who are sincere to rise up and reform women.

I have established Lajna Ima'illah for the reformation of women. Lajna should complete its organization and strive to reform women, give them moral training, and correct their morals. They should collect whatever necessary resources in order to accomplish this objective. Lajna Ima'illah has been in existence for quite some time in Qadian and there are approximately forty to fifty branches in the rest of India. By comparison however, men have more than eight hundred branches. Where the men have more than eight hundred branches, the women have forty to fifty branches, indicating that not even twenty percent of the women have organized themselves. The question of work will follow later, for naturally, the first step is to organize the structure. How can any work be done when the administrative arrangements are not yet in place? Therefore, today I am announcing to however many women are here attending the Jalsa, that if no Lajna Ima'illah has been established where they live, they should return and establish a Lajna Ima'illah. And if the resources to establish a Lajna Ima'illah are not available, for example, if there is no literate woman residing there who can do the work, she should meet with the National Lajna Ima'illah before leaving, receive guidance, leave names and addresses and so forth with them, so that they may arrange for the establishment of a Lajna in her town. If we wish to take up the task of reforming women, it is essential to establish a Lajna Ima'illah wherever there resides more than one woman. Lajna means 'committee'. In Urdu, where the word 'committee' is used, the Arabic word is 'Lajna'.

Hence, every Ahmadiyya Jama'at [chapter] should include a committee of women. Wherever there are educated women present, they should write to the National Lajna Ima'illah to obtain the rules

and regulations, gather together the women in their area, read these rules to them, and establish a Lajna. Where there are no educated women, they should request a man to write a letter, informing the National Lajna and apprising them of their needs. If such women are here at Jalsa, they should meet with the officers of the National Lajna Ima'illah to explain their needs in order for the National Lajna to arrange the fulfilment of their needs. Thus, a Lajna may be established in every Jama'at.

Hence, until [our] voice reaches the ears of every woman, no work can be accomplished. And for our call to reach them, first and foremost, it is necessary to organize all women and establish a Lajna in every village, town, and city. At this point, some places outside of India have established a Lajna, however the work performed is unsatisfactory, both in India and outside of India. Thus, I am directing this particular instruction to the women of the Jama'at, so that they leave here with the firm intention that they will not rest until a Lajna is established in their own town and village. If there are no educated women where they live and it is difficult [for them] to correspond, they can request a man to write a letter and inform the National Lajna of their present needs or they can write a letter to me, and I will make the necessary arrangements to meet their needs. My intention is to assign this work to missionaries as well, so that wherever they may go, they are sure to establish a Lajna Ima'illah. This work should be completed in every village, town, and city within this year. At this time, Lajna is not established in several cities, let alone in every village. Therefore, a thorough effort should be made this year for women to organize themselves and establish a Lajna in every Jama'at within 1945. In this way, if God Almighty enables us to do so, we can take a step towards the reformation and training of women in the next year.

I also advise the National Lajna Ima'illah to strengthen its organization and understand the importance of its work. Up until now, the Lajna Ima'illah of Qadian was considered the National Lajna. Actually, the Lajna of Qadian should be considered a separate branch, just as other cities have branches. The National Lajna should be independent. Next, the National Lajna should appoint secretaries for each of the six or seven various offices. After creating separate

offices, they should then correspond with the Jama‘ats known to them. For those Jama‘ats unknown to them, they should obtain [the relevant information] from the office of *Sadr Anjuman* Ahmadiyya. Thereafter, they should correspond with the male secretaries there, acquire information about the women in the area, and attempt to establish a Lajna there. On the one hand, I urge each woman to leave here with the intention of most certainly establishing a Lajna Ima’illah once she arrives home.

On the other hand, I am drawing the National Lajna’s attention to their responsibility to finally decide to establish Lajna Ima’illah in every city, town, and village of India within the year. [Indeed], not only within India, but it should strive to establish Lajnaat outside of India as well. I am bringing this to the attention of both [groups], for at times the locals procrastinate and at times, the headquarters delay. Therefore, I have drawn the attention of both [groups] to this, so that if National shows indolence, the locals can draw their attention towards this matter in order to motivate them. If the locals procrastinate, the headquarters should attempt to reform them. Until then, the National Lajna is at fault, and it is their mistake that they have not yet organized their own administration. Important tasks cannot be executed without staff. I have indicated to the women of the Lajna several times that they should appoint permanent staff to work in the office full-time. After all, women are teaching in schools and they are doctors, so why can we not find industrious women to permanently work for our administration? It is my belief that we can find such women who will work as clerks or secretaries for an appropriate salary and can correspond with Lajnaat outside [of Qadian]. At present, this work has been assigned to such women, who are at times available to do the job and at other times, are not. Thus, they are unable to complete the work to the required standard.

From the very beginning, I had also advised the Khuddam [the men’s auxiliary from fifteen to forty years of age] to hire permanent workers for their office and not worry about having to pay these workers some nominal salary, because unless you maintain workers on a permanent basis you will never be able to achieve success. Accordingly, the Khuddam appointed such workers and for the most

part, they have organized themselves within India. Likewise, the Lajna can never be successful until it appoints permanent workers in its office. It is absolutely wrong to believe that they can be successful in this task without employing women as permanent staff. Perhaps women could have become organized five years earlier had the National office permanently appointed clerks to regularly correspond with women who live outside [of Qadian]. Therefore, I urge the National Lajna Ima'illah to develop a scheme for their work by January 1945 and to designate such female clerks whose responsibility it would be to correspond with women in other places on a daily basis. Where the addresses [of the women] are unknown to them, they should obtain the addresses of the male secretaries [of the local Jama'ats] through *Sadr Anjuman* Ahmadiyya and request information on the local women. Subsequently, they should correspond with them to establish a Lajna. In this way, when Lajna Ima'illah is established in every place, they can make their needs known to the National Lajna and attention can be given to their reformation and training. If in a certain place there is no woman with knowledge of the Holy Qur'ān, the women can write to the National Lajna requesting the appointment of an instructor to teach them the Holy Qur'ān. If at another place there is no woman who is learned in Urdu, women can write to the National Lajna so that arrangements can be made for someone to teach them Urdu, enabling them to read the Ahmadiyya Jama'at's periodicals and the Promised Messiah's[as] books. Hence, the Lajna of those areas will correspond with the National Lajna to express their needs. It will be the National Lajna's responsibility to endeavor to meet these needs. Thus, our work cannot progress until the issues concerning women's moral training are resolved.

A woman is an extremely valuable diamond, but if she does not have proper moral training, her worth is not even equal to that of cheap glass because a piece of glass is still of some use, but a woman who lacks good education and moral training and who is unable to serve her faith is worthless. A nation can never improve until its individuals are reformed, for a nation is a collection of individuals. Thus, the National Lajna Ima'illah must accomplish a great task, which is this: to ensure that the women of the Jama'at are capable of reading religious matters, and that they are able to study and

understand them. When they develop the ability to reflect over religious matters, it is hoped that they will understand their responsibility and they will perform beneficial work for their faith. Just as the human hand performs all the work, but a hampered or injured hand is of little use, similarly, women are undoubtedly valuable and useful beings who can accomplish so much. However, they must first be trained to become competent and capable. Just as a diamond must be cut and polished in order for it to be of use and a source of beauty; women must also be reformed for them to be valuable for the faith. Consequently, the National Lajna Ima'illah has a long way to go, and an enormous task lies before it requiring them to make sacrifices day and night. It will require such women as are willing to dedicate themselves for the cause of the faith in the same way as men have dedicated themselves for the cause of the faith. Therefore, I am giving the National Lajna Ima'illah a margin of one month. Within one month, i.e., before the end of January 1945, they should organize their office.

Land has already been purchased for the office, which will be dedicated to the memory of Umme Tahir[ra]. The payment was made from a loan. Its location is on the way to *Darul Anwaar* near the [Printing] Press, close to the turning in the road. It is a good place for the building of Lajna offices. This place is located in an entirely Ahmadi neighborhood where women can come together without encountering any difficulty. Furthermore, the offices of the *Sadr Anjuman* Ahmadiyya are located nearby, from where necessary information can be obtained as the need arises. On account of difficulties due to the war, we cannot build anything there for the time being. The land was purchased from Malik Amar Ali Sahib when the time was right. At the time, Malik Sahib sacrificed a great deal for the sake of the Community and gave it [to us] for four thousand rupees, which was inexpensive considering the [property] value at the time. Had he demanded a higher price at the time, it would have been within his rights. I had asked the late Umme Tahir[ra] to inform Malik Sahib that we need this land for the Jama'at and he gave it to the Jama'at without taking any profit. Consequently, he sold it without making any profit, even though the current value of that land is much more than what he accepted. Based upon current prices, it runs to approximately twenty-five to thirty thousand rupees.

If a building is constructed there after the war, I estimate it will cost nearly thirty to forty thousand rupees.

There should be some rooms designated for offices, a hall for lectures, able to accommodate one thousand to fifteen hundred women when gathering together for their meetings, and so on. Some rooms should serve the purpose of a religious school. There should be some [living] quarters, so that women who work in the offices can stay there. There should also be a library. There should be fifteen to twenty rooms designated for this work, as well as one hall in which to hold meetings. I estimate nearly thirty to forty thousand rupees will be spent on this building. In my view, it is not a huge undertaking for the women of our Jama‘at to collect this amount. I have observed that although the women of our Jama‘at are no more educated than other women, by the Grace of Allah, they possess such spirit and sincerity of sacrifice that whenever a scheme is presented to them, it immediately becomes successful.

Twenty years ago, I initiated a scheme among the women of the Jama‘at for the building of the Berlin mosque. This [scheme] was incredibly successful and they immediately raised seventy thousand rupees. I believe there exists no other group of women in India, where such a level of sacrifice exists as within the women of our Jama‘at. If our numbers were equal to the smallest tribe in India, then by the Grace of God, not only our men, but today our women would offer up so much money for the sake of faith, that even the people of the richest countries of Europe would be unable to present such wealth for the sake of their faith. [In fact], they do not do so. At this time, we number four to five hundred thousand altogether, while the Sikh population, which is the smallest group in India, numbers four million. Thus, we constitute about one eighth or one tenth of their total. Yet, if our population were equal to that of the Sikhs, the women of our Jama‘at would collect so much for the cause of [their] faith that even the wealthiest powers of Europe would not be able to raise such amounts of money for their religion. And [indeed] they do not do so.

By the Grace of God, the spirit of sacrifice is nurtured within our Jama‘at and they are capable of achieving the true faith, which is

only attained through sacrifice. It is only we who show listlessness in our efforts at times. The question does not even arise as to where the money will come from. For when we aim to do something for the sake of God Almighty's religion and we wish to complete that work, God Almighty says, "Be" and it is. Money is not an issue. By the Grace of God, the women of our Jama'at will easily deliver the money.

What is needed is for the national offices of Lajna Ima'illah to organize themselves and hire permanent workers. They should acquire the addresses of women from all areas and initiate correspondence with them, establish a Lajna everywhere, and organize the women there. After this, just as men hold two meetings, one being this Jalsa Salana and one *Majlis-e Shura*, women should hold another *Ijtema* [gathering] at one other time besides this Jalsa. Representatives from the various *majalis* in India should participate in this gathering and appraise their work and formulate the kind of rules and regulations which will enable them to progress further. At this occasion (Jalsa Salana), the National Lajna should consult with those women from out of town to decide when the *Ijtema* should be held. If the *Ijtema* were to be held during the occasion of *Majlis-e Shura* and different departmental secretaries were to be invited, then perhaps I could also take some time out to offer guidance on how they can structure their work.

Once they become organized, the next step to be taken for their reformation will be for every single woman to learn to read and write in her own mother tongue. As a matter of fact, when a nation learns to read and write in their own language, the acquisition of all other knowledge becomes effortless. What we refer to as *'mantiq'* or 'logic' is what every man and woman applies in their daily conversation. When you laugh at someone's foolishness, it is due to, or the inference is, that you believe what the person said is illogical. When you say that you do not understand something or that it is against reason, the term 'illogical' is used to intimidate you.

The truth is, that there is no [special] knowledge, which is known to men but not to you. Rather, it is the same concepts you use in your day-to-day conversations. There are thousands of terms you

hear in foreign languages and are amazed and astounded by them, yet these terms are nothing more than what are used in ordinary daily conversations. Consequently, if you learn to read and write in Urdu, you will be capable of easily understanding all these terms and you can benefit from all sorts of knowledge. At this time, when these large and unknown terms are presented before you which make you feel impressed, once you have learned Urdu, all of these terms will appear relatively simple to you. Therefore, the first step Lajna Ima'illah should take once it is organized, is to teach all the women within the Jama'at to read and write.

Next, the second step should be to write down in straightforward Urdu the principles of Salāt, fasting, and other major commands of *Shariah* and teach them to all women. The third step is for all women to learn the translation of Salāt, so that they do not recite the Salāt as if they were parrots. Let it not be that when reading Salāt, they do not know what they say during Salāt.

The final and the most crucial step is for all women to learn the translation of the Holy Qur'ān. Within a few years' time, there should be no woman left in our Jama'at who does not know the translation of the Holy Qur'ān. At this time, there may not be even one woman in a thousand who knows the translation of the Holy Qur'ān. My position is that of a teacher, therefore there is no harm if I request those women who know the translation of the Holy Qur'ān to stand up and those who do not know the translation to remain seated. I would like to see how many among you know the translation of the Holy Qur'ān. Thus, all those who know the translation of the Holy Qur'ān should stand up.

(Upon Hazrat Khalifat-ul-Masih II's[ra] instruction, many women stood up and upon seeing this, Hazrat Khalifat-ul-Masih II[ra] continued.)

It is a very satisfying thing to see that more women than I had estimated stood up. *Al-Hamdu Lillah*! Now you can sit down. For me, this happiness is greater than the joy of *Eid*. I had thought that the number of women who knew the translation of the Holy Qur'ān would be less than one-tenth of the women who stood up. However,

it is God Almighty's Grace that there are more women who know the translation of the Holy Qur'ān than I had perceived. Yet for me, this is not a source of contentment. I will only be satisfied when each one of you knows the translation of the Holy Qur'ān. It will only be a source of happiness for me when you not only know the translation, but you also understand the meaning of the Holy Qur'ān and I will be truly happy when every one of you can teach the meaning of the Holy Qur'ān to others. Greater than this, will be that day when God Almighty will pay witness to the fact that you have understood the Holy Qur'ān and that you have acted upon it. I now feel that I have fulfilled the purpose for which I gave this speech. I have had this cold since the day before yesterday, which has given me a sore throat and made it difficult for me to talk. I must now go and give a long lecture to the men, which you will also be able to hear.

Therefore, I will end this here and go over what I have just said to you.

1. Each one of you women should leave here with the intention of establishing a Lajna as soon as you return to your hometown.
2. The National Lajna Ima'illah should become organized within a month's time. They should strive and work hard to such a degree that they should at the minimum organize all the women within the year in all the countries, particularly so within India, and they should establish a Lajna Ima'illah in every village, town and city.

Following this, I would like to make an announcement concerning the scheme I initiated some days ago of translating the Holy Qur'ān into seven languages. Within this, I assigned women to cover the cost of the translation and publication of the Holy Qur'an into one language, and the translation and publication of one Islamic book into one language, meaning twenty-eight thousand rupees. I then asked the women of our Jama'at to cover the cost of the translation of the Holy Qur'ān and its publication into the German language and the translation and publication of one Islamic book into the German language, which is estimated to come out to twenty-eight thousand rupees. Consequently, the women of our Jama'at, in keeping with their previous tradition, have pledged thirty-four

thousand rupees at this time. By the Grace of God Almighty, the required amount has been pledged and actually, they have pledged more than what was asked. However, there is still a section of women in the Jama‘at who have not taken part in this [scheme]. I desire that every woman should be a part of this, even if she gives only a *pai* [a penny], so that she is not deprived of this virtuous opportunity.

Thus, I would like those women who have not yet participated to take part. If a woman can only donate half [a penny] then let her give only half but let her take part in this virtuous scheme. For it is not a matter of money, but the [point] is that when this translation is published in the German language, every individual who benefits from this translation will pray for these women, ‘May God Almighty shower His Mercy upon those, owing to whom we have received this blessing.’ And when through this translation, a person becomes Muslim, God Almighty’s mercy will descend upon those women, who participated in this translation solely because they accepted the faith. Therefore, I wish for none of you to remain deprived of this blessing. And let there be no woman among you who does not partake of these blessings. If she is only capable of giving a few pennies, then let her give a small sum, for in the eyes of God Almighty, if she is only capable of giving a few pennies, it is as if she has given a million rupees. God Almighty does not look at the amount, but He looks at the piety and the intention with which the money has been given.

Apart from this, I would like to mention another matter. Our Gold Coast Jama‘at has decided to establish a women’s school, for which a local Ahmadi has given land worth fifteen thousand rupees. And now the Lajna there has decided that women should raise money for the construction of the school. I have received a letter from them, asking their Ahmadi sisters of India to assist them in this matter. Hence, I have spoken with the National Lajna Ima’illah about this and they have pledged to send four thousand rupees. Out of this four thousand, the Lajna Ima’illah of Delhi has pledged fifteen hundred through Chaudhry Sir Muhammad Zafrullah Khan[ra] and the National Lajna Ima’illah has distributed the rest of the amount among various Lajnaat, who will be informed shortly. Very small

amounts have been assigned to the Lajnaat, in fact some have been given the responsibility for covering only four or five rupees. I am hopeful that as soon as each Lajna is informed, they will certainly participate in this donation. As a matter of fact, four thousand rupees is such a small amount that if I wished, I could have simply sent it from Qadian. However, I wish to spur an awakening and spirit of sacrifice within the whole Jama'at. To this end, it is necessary for every individual to be included in working for the faith. This is why I have distributed this amount throughout the women of the Jama'at. Each Lajna will be told of this and when they receive this information, every woman should take part in this, so that she is not deprived of the blessings.

The Gold Coast is in that part of West Africa where some among them, wear no clothes, eat raw food, and live under the trees. By the Grace of Allah Almighty, our missionaries there are doing a wonderful job of setting up schools and boarding for men and women, where they are educated. Those who were naked are now wearing clothes. Those who lived under the trees are building houses, and the *Hubshis* [locals] are reading the Holy Qur'ān and offering Salāt and in this way, Islam is progressing. The flag of the Holy Prophet[sa] is being staked into the ground and the Christian missionaries are fleeing before our missionaries' eyes. Thus, every woman should absolutely participate in this donation, through which a women's school will be built in this country. She should participate, knowing that the school which will be built from this donation, will be the means through which ignorant women, who had never even heard of the name of the Holy Prophet[sa], will learn of religion.

There is another thing that I wished to say. I have decided that an effort should be made this year to build a women's boardinghouse in Qadian. People who live out of town have often complained that their girls are unable to attain higher religious education in Qadian, due to the lack of a women's boardinghouse. Now, I am announcing that this work will begin this year, *In Sha' Allah*. I cannot say that the construction of the building will also be completed, for there are many difficulties presented in construction due to the war. At any rate, the work towards the boardinghouse will commence this year. May Allah

grant you the utmost capacity in obtaining religious knowledge and may you become so beneficial to the Jama'at, that while you are in this world, the world benefits from you and learns from you. When you go before God, may you become the beneficiary of His Blessings and may the world continue to pray for you because of your good deeds.

Now, I pray that God Almighty may inculcate in you a sincere love for Him, the Holy Prophet[sa], the Holy Qur'ān, the religion of Islam and mankind. May you become such a lofty presence that you have no equal in this world. When you leave this world, may God Almighty be pleased with you, may God Almighty's Messenger[sa] be pleased with you, may your family be pleased with you, may your neighbors be also pleased with you, and may the entire world be also pleased with you. Some of you are mothers and some of you are going to be mothers. The Holy Prophet[sa] has stated, paradise lies under the feet of mothers, thus may God Almighty make you true mothers. May heaven be created within our nation through you and when you depart this world and go to the next world, may you become the recipients of God Almighty's mercy and blessings and may you attain Allah's Paradise, *Amīn*.

Ahmadi Women and the Training of Children

Hazrat Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad,
Khalifat-ul-Masih II[ra]

January 25, 1946

In my opinion, the responsibility of teaching children [the characteristic of] hard work lies with their teachers and their parents, yet they have not instilled in them the habit of striving and working hard. We are competing against such nations whose youth do not marry well into their forties, and they spend their lives working in laboratories. Consumed in their work, they meet their end at their desks and leave their nations with extremely useful inventions.

We face such people who when they ran out of cannonballs, gunpowder, or other weapons they imported discarded rifles from America in order to fight their enemies. The British asserted, 'Let the Germans come. We will fight them at sea. If we are unable to fight them at sea, we will fight them upon the shores. If we are unable to fight them upon the shores, we will fight them in the streets of our cities. When we are unable to fight them in the streets, we will fight them at the doors of our homes. If we are still unable to fight them, we will board ships to America, however we will never end the war with them.' [Adapted from Sir Winston Churchill's speech "We Shall Fight on the Beaches" 1940].

These are the sort of people we are facing and to challenge them, we are given such young men who claim they will bear hunger, they will go into the jungles, the mountains, and the deserts, who claim they are willing to leave their homeland to go abroad, who claim they are ready to sacrifice everything close to their heart, however, once they are assigned with a task, they say, "I cannot manage on forty rupees and hence I have come running back." Another says, "I could not adjust to the new place; hence I was forced to leave my work." At the same time, he writes that the [Ahmadiyya] movement should not take offence at his action and keep him listed among the *waqif* [lifelong devotees of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community]. He returns

to enjoy the company of his mother, father, and wife, because he missed them, yet he also asks that we should not revoke his *waqf* [lifelong devotion to religious services for the Ahmaddiyya Copmmunity]. This is the sort of youth we have been given. What work can they be capable of?

We require such people who do not move an inch from where they have been stationed. Their dead bodies may well fall a foot towards us, but the step of a living person should always move a foot ahead, not behind. We require such people, and it is these people who work to build the foundation of nations. Allah Almighty says of the companions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa]:

فَمِنۡهُمۡ مَّنۡ قَضٰی نَحۡبَهٗ وَ مِنۡهُمۡ مَّنۡ یَّنۡتَظِرُ ۫

"Some of them have fulfilled their vow, and there are others who wait."

(Holy Qur'ān, Ch. 33: V. 24)

And from them, some have already sacrificed their lives and among them are those who are waiting. This is the *waqf* which brings about a revolution in the world.

Hence, the teachers and the parents have an obligation to supervise their children and raise them to be hard working. Inculcate in them a habit of saying prayers, fasting, and following other Islamic commandments. Develop in them an interest in the commandments of religion. Teachers should encourage the parents to pay full attention to their children's education. The truth of the matter is that mothers determine their child's good or bad future. A child learns most of their morals at an early age. If mothers are vigilant and do not allow their children to indulge in immorality, then children can grow up free of ill-habits to a certain extent.

However, if at an early age, children are not strictly checked when they steal, lie, or develop other bad habits, they are unable to rid themselves of such behavior when grown. There is a well-known story in our country of a mother whose son became a thief. From a thief, he turned into a bandit. One day, he killed someone during a robbery, and

he was sentenced to a hanging. Right before he was hung, he asked permission to say something to his mother. The mother was called and when she came forward, he asked to speak into her ear. He was allowed to do so and as he leaned in close to his mother, he bit her cheek. His mother screamed and stepped back. People rebuked him, saying, "You are a person of such ill character that on the one hand you are about to be hanged, yet you still have not learned your lesson! Your heart has not softened and now you have bitten your mother's cheek?" He replied, "You are unaware that today, I am being hanged due to my mother. Biting her cheek pales in comparison to my being hanged. The truth of the matter is that my mother should be hanged instead of me." He further said, "I was a young child, yet I used to wander about in the streets. If anyone complained to my mother about me, she would argue with him, 'My child could never be like this. People say this out of animosity. I do not know why people are so hateful against my child. My child is not wicked.' Whenever I stole pencils, paper, pen, ink, etc., from school, my mother would tell me, 'Don't put it here, lest someone sees it. Rather, put it over there.' If someone complained of my stealing, my mother would curse them and claim that they are ruining my reputation. All this made me a thief and from a thief, I became a bandit. During a robbery, I killed someone and so now I am being hanged. My mother is entirely responsible for this murder. Therefore, instead of merely having her cheek bitten, she should be hanged in my place."

Similarly, there are boys who would like to dedicate their lives to the service of the Jama'at, but their parents discourage them and advise them to find positions in other places, and serve the Jama'at later by paying *chanda*. However, where there is a need for individuals, c*handa* cannot suffice in those cases. To an extent, I think this responsibility lies upon Lajna Ima'illah. If Lajna Ima'illah impresses the needs and significance of *waqf* upon the minds of women then within a year, women will also offer up their liver; it is often said that a motherland offers up its liver [a metaphor often used in India to denote the sacrifice of something most beloved to the person concerned]. A woman's liver is her children. If mothers motivate their sons to dedicate their lives for *waqf* and involve themselves in other good deeds, I believe many more of our youth will dedicate their lives for *waqf*.

There is an incident recorded in Islam's history of when the Muslim army suffered defeat. Hazrat 'Umar[ra] sent every man who could be made available to support this army, however the army still lacked manpower. The Iranian army consisted of thirty thousand soldiers. There was no obstacle in the path between the battleground and Medina. At that time, a Muslim general delivered a speech and said, "Today you are responsible for the survival and the safeguarding of your faith. If you are defeated today, then there lies no army between you and Medina to hold the enemy back. If the enemy escapes from here, it will head straight to Medina to attack." At this time, a well-known poetess by the name of Khansa' beckoned her three sons and said, "Your father was an immoral man. I had to borrow money from my brother, which I would give my husband until the time of his death. You were all little, but I worked hard to raise you on my own. I have lived my life virtuously and with modesty. You are all witnesses to this." Khansa' continued and said, "You know that I have put much time and effort into raising you and have never asked you for anything in return." Her sons agreed. She continued, "You are my three children and I have no one in this world except the three of you. My love for you is clearly evident by my service to you. Today, a time has come upon Islam when men are being called upon to fight. You must heed that call. If you come back this evening having attained victory, may you come back alive, otherwise may your dead bodies be found lying upon that battleground. If you do not obey this order of mine, then I will not forgive you my bounty on the Day of Judgment." Her sons replied, "Yes mother. We accept." Upon saying this, they set off.

One of the most difficult challenges the Muslim army faced, was that the Iranians had brought their warrior elephants with them. Whenever a horse or a camel faced an elephant, it would run away. [At the time,] a Muslim general told two of the three brothers to join him. The general said that they would attack the elephants from the front. Although death was certain, this tactic may well save the rest of the Muslims. The brothers agreed. It is extremely difficult to attack an elephant from the front, as elephants have been trained to fight in battles by wrapping a person in their trunks and then throwing them to the ground. They proceeded to attack the army chief's elephant. One brother took a position to the right of the elephant and the other

brother to the left. The general stood straight before the elephant. When the general attacked from the front, the elephant would turn his head to the right or left. Whenever it turned to the right, the brother on the right side would attempt to attack its trunk with his sword. The elephant would lift him up with his trunk and throw him to the ground. Once the elephant turned to the left, the brother on the left attempted to attack its trunk with his sword. The elephant would then lift him up with his trunk and slam him to the ground. However, this did not deter the two brothers from the elephant's sides. [They continued] until they had badly injured it. Finally, the elephant took fright and began to retreat. When this elephant began to retreat, the other elephants in the formation also took fright, and they too turned back in retreat. Due to the stampede of elephants, a panic arose in the opposing army and the whole Iranian army ran away. Thus, the Islamic army achieved victory. Therefore, there have lived such women as these, who preferred their children to be martyred in the battlefield, rather than see them alive having been defeated. Resting aside the training of their children to sacrifice their lives, today, we see women who even discourage their children from dedicating their lives for the cause of faith.

The truth of the matter is that women are predominantly led by their emotions. If you appeal to their emotions, they can achieve great heights of virtue! In one battle, Hazrat Sa'ad[ra] was a commander, and he received a complaint concerning a new Muslim, who was found to be drinking alcohol. Hazrat Sa'ad[ra] had the man imprisoned. At that time, Hazrat Sa'ad[ra], had a wound on his back side, so he was unable to ride. Eventually, a high seat was made for him and Hazrat Sa'ad[ra] could give out commands while half stretched out on the seat. Hazrat Sa'ad's[ra] tent was close to where the new Muslim soldier was imprisoned. Whenever he heard a slogan raised or a mournful cry from the battleground, the new Muslim would pull at his chains in anger and cry out, "If only I could have been part of today's battle. Is there any Muslim who will free me? Even though I am sinful, I have no less anguish in my heart for Islam than any other." Yet, the other Muslim soldiers were not ready to free him because they were afraid of angering Hazrat Sa'ad[ra]. At last, Hazrat Sa'ad's wife[ra] said, "Let pass what will. I am going to unlock his chains, as I cannot watch him suffer like this." She opened the prisoner's chains and set him free.

The new Muslim covered his face and joined the Muslim army in battle. Wherever he attacked, he lifted the spirits of the rest of the army. In the evening, when the fighting was over, he ran back to where he was imprisoned and Hazrat Sa'ad's wife[ra] once again locked him in his chains. During the battle, Hazrat Sa'ad[ra] suspected that this particular man was present during combat, since he had a unique style of fighting, but he[ra] dismissed the notion, thinking that as he was imprisoned it must be someone else. The next day, when the battle began, Hazrat Sa'ad's wife[ra] once again opened his chains and released him. He joined the Muslim army and attacked the enemy with great valor and courage. At the end of the day, when the Muslims were victorious, Hazrat Sa'ad[ra] grew more certain that he had indeed seen the imprisoned soldier fighting in battle. He turned to his wife and said, "I believe this is your mischief. It appears that you released him. I will punish you for breaking the law." His wife replied, "You may punish me as you wish, but my conscience would not allow me to see my husband merely watching the battle, while he imprisons another person, who has so much passion for Islam that he attempts to break open his chains upon hearing the sounds of battle." Hearing his wife talk so intrepidly, his anger melted away. He then forgave the new Muslim. Thus, women are often motivated by their emotion.

The Lajna Ima'illah has a responsibility to tell women that today, Islam needs their sons. Today, Islam needs their husbands. Today, Islam needs their wealth. It is their duty that they present this without hesitation. If this practice is adopted, then I am sure that even those with a weak faith, will show themselves to be a model of high sincerity. One man told me that it is was his wife who made him a strong Ahmadi. He said, "When I brought my salary home, she would ask whether I had paid *chanda* on it. If I said I would pay it tomorrow, she would refuse to cook, saying she would not cook food bought from this money. At times, I was forced to go in the middle of the night to pay *chanda*. Until I showed her the receipt, she would not begin cooking, otherwise she said it was unlawful money and, therefore, she could not cook with it." Hence, if women support us and tell their children that if they do not pledge their lives to *waqf* and they do not develop piety within themselves, they will not forgive them their motherly right in the Hereafter. They should let them know that they will tell God that he did not fulfill his right; that my son was

disobedient for he did not listen to me. If mothers take this stand, a revolution will be brought about in no time. If mothers adopt this stance, then ninety-nine percent of the boys will be reformed, ninety-nine percent of our boys will improve in their studies. They will become motivated, and they will develop the spirit of sacrifice.

I would like to take this opportunity to tell the women of our Jama'at to inspire their sons to dedicate themselves to *waqf* for the sake of their faith. For those who are not accepted for *waqf* by our Movement, motivate them to take money out of their earnings and donate it for the publications of Islam and Ahmadiyyat. If their sons are not prepared to do so, then it is the duty of every mother to warn her sons, "You have not fulfilled your right to me and on Judgment Day, I will tell God Almighty, here stands my disobedient son. He did not listen to me."

I see that the time has come to direct the Movement in a magnificent way. However, we cannot succeed in this quest, until our women unite with us. The day when our women adopt this type of thinking, rest assured that the reformation of our boys will suddenly become easy, and they will work vigilantly in every area of life.

Therefore, progress in our education is absolutely necessary for our Jama'at. Education plays a key role in guiding a person to the right path and to understanding truth. It facilitates the path for any task, which may lie before a person. One of my friends mentioned that his grandfather was Ahmadi, but his father was not. It occurred to him that his grandfather was a very pious and revered man, and he was never unjust. There must have been an inherent truth [within Ahmadiyyat] for him to have accepted Ahmadiyyat. Consequently, he began reading the books of the Promised Messiah[as] and as a result, he became Ahmadi.

Now, this was only possible because he was educated. If he had been an unlettered person, he would never have thought [to pursue this further]. Even if he had thought of it, he would have been unable to read the books. Hence, it is necessary that the Jama'at have not only hundreds, but thousands of educated people. *Sadr Anjuman* Ahmadiyya requires many workers, as does *Tahrik-i-Jadid*

Ahmadiyya. In addition, we need five thousand men skilled at trade, who are willing to dedicate their lives to Jama‘at work. This need cannot be met until the Jama‘at makes a concerted effort to improve the education of its members. We should have enough qualified BA and MA graduates to fulfil our needs, after which we can pass them onto government [positions].

I see that the doors for the advancement of our Jama‘at are opening swiftly. That which previously appeared remote, is rapidly approaching us now. The way awareness and attention are emerging within our people, reveals that the fragrance of our lost Joseph has reached us. It would be pure laziness and carelessness on our part if we did not set out with a caravan and bring our Joseph home.

(Misbah, February 1946, pp. 3-10)

Praise of the Work of Qadian's Ahmadi Women and an Expression of Approval

Delivered by Hazrat Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad, Khalifat-ul-Masih II[ra]

February 15, 1942

In a Friday sermon, Hazrat Khalifat-ul-Masih[ra] stated:

Compared to men, women have exhibited an excellent example of sacrifice. Granted, that due to their lack of knowledge in mathematics, they have made mistakes, but I was able to pick those out in a timely manner and I directed them as to how they could remove those mistakes. Accordingly, they labored with diligence and hard work. I believe that if men show the same spirit our women have shown, we will be as victorious as we were hundreds of years earlier. If the men develop the same sort of fervor and passion the women have demonstrated, then our day of victory is very near. Women have worked with such fervor, that now some of their appearances are virtually unrecognizable. They did not care to eat. They did not care to rest, and they worked so hard that I believe that some of them lost three *sair* [half a kilo], some have lost four *sair*, and yet others five *sair*. Compared to them, men have worked very little.

Those who have observed them, representatives of the opposition, and polling officers have been greatly impressed by our women's sacrifices. The women, who came to help the polling officers on behalf of the government, were so impressed that they said, "We do not understand what kind of Jama'at this is. How did this spirit of self-sacrifice develop?" There were pregnant women whose labor pains had already begun, who came to vote. Some came to vote who were in such extreme pain, that they fainted right after casting their votes. There were some who had given birth only twelve hours earlier and arrived lying upon stretchers, simply to cast their votes. If there were only one such incident it could be construed as an exception, however here we had more than a dozen women who came to vote during childbirth pains, or who had given birth only a few hours earlier. Then

there were some who came to vote who were in such a poorly state that they could not even sit and had to be brought upon a gurney. They were supported by one relative from the left and another from the right, lest they should fall. There are more than a dozen examples of such sacrifice. This display of sacrifice had a profound effect upon those women who were themselves the agents of the opposition party. They were amazed by the display of such sacrifice. By exhibiting such sacrifice during the elections, our women have proved that they deserve to be forever remembered for this sacrifice and their example should be brought up repeatedly within the Jama‘at. Through their unprecedented example and high level of devotion, they have proved to surpass the men in national matters. I see that the men are very lax in matters of national interest, and they do not seem to fully understand the purpose of sacrificing for their nation. They appear ready when discussing the idea of sacrificing for the sake of their faith. However, when asked to sacrifice for the sake of national interest, they do not pay their full attention to it.

(Misbah, March 1962, pp. 12-17)

Responsibility for Tabligh and Ahmadi Women

Address to the Ladies at Jalsa Salana
Delivered by Hazrat Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad,
Khalifat-ul-Masih II[ra]

October 1, 1946

(8 York Road, New Delhi, India)

After *Tashahhud*, *Ta'awwuz,* and recitation of *Surah Al-Fatihah,* Hazrat Khalifat-ul-Masih[ra] said:

In the Holy Qur'ān, wherever the beginning of the creation of mankind has been mentioned, God Almighty has mentioned that first, a soul was created. And then:

خَلَقَ مِنْهَا زَوْجَهَا

["…*created therefrom its mate…*"]
(Holy Qur'ān, Ch. 4: V. 2)

from this, its partner was born.

The Bible explains 'from this, its partner was born' by stating that a woman was created from splitting Hazrat Adam's[as] rib. However, the Holy Qur'ān refutes this concept that a woman was born from splitting apart Hazrat Adam's[as] rib. The Holy Qur'ān says:

خَلَقَ مِنْهَا زَوْجَهَا

["*…created therefrom its mate"*]
(Holy Qur'ān, Ch. 4: V. 2)

The mate is created from that very being. This means that Allah created woman from the same species as man. Here مِن (min) refers to species, and the Holy Qur'ān produces many examples of this. At one place, God Almighty says:

اَطِيۡعُوا اللّٰهَ وَ اَطِيۡعُوا الرَّسُوۡلَ وَ اُولِى الۡاَمۡرِ مِنۡكُمۡ ۚ

["…*obey Allah and obey His Messenger and those who are in authority among you*."]

(Holy Qur'ān, Ch. 4: V. 60)

Which in other words means choose your leaders from among yourselves.

Here, no one would translate the word مِنۡكُمۡ as choosing your leaders from among those who were cleaved from your ribs. The word clearly states that those people are from among your group. Your circumstances match their circumstances, their needs match your needs, they are human just as you are, and they harbor feelings just as you do. They understand your needs. Accept them as your leaders and do not create phantom leaders, for the latter neither exists, nor can they benefit you. The words *minha* and مِنۡكُمۡ *minkum* are mentioned innumerable times in the Holy Qur'ān, but that does not mean that everything was created by cutting open your ribs. Rather, it means that just as you are, they too are of the same kind. Therefore, when God Almighty says:

خَلَقَ مِنۡهَا زَوۡجَهَا

["…*created therefrom its mate*…"]

(Holy Qur'ān, Ch. 4: V. 2)

It means that a woman is created from the same species as the man. This reveals to us that just as men have been bestowed with a heart and mind, women have been bestowed with a similar heart and mind. The rib is not mentioned here. However, what is being referred to here is the commonality between men and women. Since the creation of this world, times have come when men have tried to prevent women from carrying out their responsibilities. Similarly, other times have passed when women have tried to prevent men from fulfilling their responsibilities. There have been other times in history when men viewed a woman as a different creature. At other times, women have viewed men as different beings. However, the revelation of the Holy Qur'ān dispels this misconception. The Holy Qur'an states:

خَلَقَ مِنْهَا زَوْجَهَا

["…*created therefrom its mate*…"]
(Holy Qur'ān, Ch. 4: V. 2)

By stating this, the Holy Qur'ān eradicates these differences and tells us that women have the same responsibilities as men, they have the same sentiments as the other and both are answerable to God Almighty for their deeds.

It is another matter that men have different responsibilities and women have different responsibilities. However, we cannot say that women cannot comprehend men's obligations. Even men are engaged in different jobs and occupations. There are some who are revenue collectors, some are police inspectors, and others are doctors. Despite their differing professions, men share the same feelings and emotions, which have no bearing on their responsibilities. Therefore, just as their various professions makes no difference upon their feelings and their sentiments, women's assignation of a different role makes no difference upon her feelings or her sentiments. The only difference is in the division of labor. Certain tasks are assigned to men and others to women, but both are held accountable. The Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] said:

كُلُّكُمْ رَاعٍ وَكُلُّكُمْ مَسْئُولٌ عَنْ رَعِيَّتِهِ

[Each one of you is a guardian and will be questioned regarding his dependents.]

That each one of you will be asked regarding his own duties and his own responsibilities. Just as a shepherd tends to his sheep with care and attention, similarly each man and woman is responsible for his or her duty. If a woman is entrusted to take care of her children, her husband's home and finances, she will be answerable for these duties. If the man is responsible to provide for the welfare of his children, he will be held accountable for these duties. By the same token, a household servant or a caretaker is accountable for the job assigned to him. Consequently, it is wrong for men to presume that women are incapable of offering sacrifices or participating in religious activities and that they are created as playthings for them. It is also wrong for women to believe that they are unable to participate

in any kind of sacrifice. Both of these outlooks are erroneous. They will not be successful in *tabligh,* until and unless our men and women are fully aware of their individual responsibilities and strive to overcome their differences.

It is for this reason that I created Lajna Ima'illah as a separate organization. Lajna Ima'illah means "An assembly of Allah's maidservants." Just as the most favorable of all names for a man is Abdullah [which means, Servant (male) of Allah], that for a woman is Amatullah [which means, Servant (female) of Allah].

The attribute of the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa], which Allah has mentioned with special reverence in the Holy Qur'ān is 'Abdullah,' which means the servant of God Almighty. Thus, to become God Almighty's servant is the greatest attribute. Likewise, a woman's best quality is to become God Almighty's handmaid. Just as it is obligatory for a slave to carry out his master's instructions, I have given you the name of Lajna Ima'illah, to bring your attention to strive in becoming servants of Allah. This is your opportunity to carry out the tasks which will please your Master.

Thus, when you stand before Him, be an applicant for His reward. However, this is also an occasion where you could forget your duties to God Almighty and thus, be prepared to accept His wrath and stand before Him as one of the guilty. There is a world of difference between the one who is presented before God Almighty to receive his reward and the one who is presented as a criminal. There is a great difference between a person who is presented in the court of a King as a criminal and a general who presents himself in the court to receive his reward. People envy the general, but feel sorry for the criminal, even though both are presented in the court of the King. For one entered as a criminal, with his head hung low in shame, and the other arrived triumphant in his victory, with the surrounding people envying him. Hence, understand well your obligations and be vigilant. In the eyes of Allah Almighty, men and women are equal, as are their responsibilities.

When we peruse the annals of history, we find two prophets whose historical accounts are preserved. The life of one of these

prophets, the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa], is very well preserved. His whole life is very accurately and truly preserved. The other prophet is Hazrat Jesus[as]. A portion of his life is accurately recorded. We see that during the time of these prophets, women made major sacrifices. Among the disciples of Hazrat Jesus[as] were women who spent day and night doing *tabligh*. Even today, Christian women feel proud of the sacrifices these early Christian ladies made. When Hazrat Jesus[as] was taken off the Cross, he was kept in a sepulcher. Hazrat Masih[as] prophesied that he will come out alive after staying in the grave for three days and three nights. When Hazrat Jesus[as] arose from the sepulcher, it was women who first visited him. The men had fled away in fear, but it was Mary Magdalene and two other ladies who first arrived to see him that morning. They did not fear persecution from government officials. At this time, women showed valor and strength in their faith compared to men, which has been a source of pride for Christian women.

Next, the exemplary standards of sacrifice displayed by the women from the Holy Prophet Muhammad's[sa] era have yet to be seen. A Muslim's heart is enraptured when they learn of the elevated standards of sacrifices exhibited by their splendid mothers and grandmothers. There is no doubt that the female companions who accepted the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] were Arab and without a doubt, the majority of Muslims are not Arab. However, spiritually speaking, the female companions of the Holy Prophet[sa] are our mothers and grandmothers. Hence, in the Holy Qur'ān, God Almighty refers to the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] as the father of all Muslims. He is not only the father of Arab Muslims, but also the father of Pathan Muslims, the father of Rajput Muslims, the father of Jatoon Muslims, and the father of Muslims who are considered untouchables. In fact, he is the father of anyone who recites the *Kalima.* Similarly, the female companions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] were the mothers and sisters of the companions of his time, as well as the spiritual grandmothers of all Muslims living today. When a Muslim reads the historical accounts, he is astounded by the superb sacrifices his grandmothers suffered.

During the time of the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa], Muslims were persecuted, and they were subjected to a great deal of pain and

suffering. Of these Muslims some were free, and others were slaves. The slaves were tortured and often targeted by enemies. However, the enemies targeted the free Muslims less, therefore they could not persecute them as freely. A husband and wife among these slaves were so brutally persecuted by their master, that one's heart trembles when one hears of it. Their master would lay them on blazing hot sand and jump upon their chests, leaving them under the blazing sun for so long that their eyes would swell and redden. Still, the master would have no mercy on them.

Once the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] passed by and saw that they were being tortured so cruelly. Their master had forced them to lay upon the hot sand, while he tortured them. He repeatedly asked them to refute the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] and to proclaim that other gods should be worshipped beside Allah. Just as a father becomes distressed upon witnessing his child's affliction, how could the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] who felt a greater love than any parent, withstand such a sight? He felt great anguish. He stopped there to pray for them and received a revelation from God. The Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] counselled them, "Be patient. Be patient a while longer. God Almighty will soon remove from you this pain and liberate you from this suffering." Within two to three days, the man broke free from this world due to unbearable suffering, and later his master killed the woman with a spear.

These people were slaves. They did not belong to free families. It was thought that the intellect of slaves was not strong and that generations of slavery had rendered them less intelligent than ordinary servants. However, by accepting the Holy Prophet[sa], they became so wise and of such strong resolve that they sacrificed everything but refused to deny the Oneness of God. Among these slaves was also Hazrat Bilal[ra], an African, whose master would subject him to intense torture, but [today] I wish to give you examples of women's sacrifice. I have already given one example above and I will now give you some more incidences of sacrifices made by women.

When the persecution of Muslims in Mecca intensified, and the enemies were increasing in their mischief every day. When

suffering had become unbearable, the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] advised his followers to migrate towards Abyssinia. They replied, "O Prophet of Allah! How can we go to another place and live in peace and harmony while you suffer here?"

The Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] replied that he had not received God Almighty's permission to migrate yet, but they should do so. [He continued to say that] when he receives permission to migrate, he would do so. Among the emigrants was a woman, who was helping her husband load the camels in the early morning. Hazrat 'Umar[ra], who had not yet accepted Islam, happened to pass that way. He was deeply moved by what he saw. Although Arabs were disbelievers and transgressors, they were brave, and their hand would not rise to hurt the weak and the old. Here in the early hours of the day, Hazrat 'Umar[ra] saw a woman preparing to leave Mecca forever. In a voice heavy with tears, he inquired, "Lady! It appears that you are preparing for a journey?" She replied, "We have planned to leave here. The suffering has extended beyond what we can bear. Alas, what did we ever do to you? We only say, Allah is One, yet you stop us from saying even that. Therefore, we leave." Upon seeing her helplessness and sadness, even the hard-hearted 'Umar, who had no mercy for Muslims, was moved to tears and addressed her, "Okay lady, God be with you." and with that, he went away.

Thus, women left their homes, suffered abuse, and accepted death, but they never wished to hide their belief that God was One. These women were women just like you. Just as you have hearts within your chests, so did they have hearts. Just as you have children, so did they have children. Yet, they sacrificed everything on the path towards God.

Hazrat 'Umar's[ra] sister was a woman as well and it was through her, that Hazrat 'Umar[ra] was given the message. It is said that Hazrat 'Umar[ra] left his home with a sword in his hand. Someone asked him where he was going. He stated that he was going to kill the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa]. He was then asked what he would achieve by killing the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa]. If he murdered the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa], his family would kill [Hazrat 'Umar[ra]] and his family. It was better for him to first take care of his

own family instead, as his sister had already accepted Islam. Upon hearing this, Hazrat 'Umar[ra] went straight to his sister's home. When he arrived, a companion of the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] was reciting the Holy Qur'ān to his sister and brother-in-law. As soon as he knocked on the door, they hid the companion and the pages of the Holy Qur'ān. Hazrat 'Umar[ra] entered the house and asked what they had been reading. They answered, "The Holy Qur'ān." Hazrat 'Umar[ra] asked, "Who was teaching you?" At this they responded, "What concern is that to you?" Hazrat 'Umar[ra] again asked them, "I have heard that you have become believers of One God." He then raised his hand to strike his brother-in-law. When he raised his arm in the act of striking him, his sister realized that her husband was about to be hit because he had accepted Islam. This gave her the courage to stand between Hazrat 'Umar[ra] and her husband and she said, "Yes, yes. We are now Muslims. If you wish to beat us for this, then do so."

In the meantime, Hazrat 'Umar's[ra] hand had already risen and was swinging down. His hand was no longer in his control and consequently, his arm jolted down and struck his sister's face with such force that the room echoed with the sound of its contact. Blood came rushing out of her nose. Hazrat 'Umar[ra], who had been intending to strike his brother-in-law until he fell to the ground, stood shocked at the sight before him. Although he was terribly cruel and a staunch disbeliever, he was still the son of a noble Arab family. His bravery and sense of honor was shaken. Suddenly, he knew what it felt like to be a criminal, for he had raised his hand at a woman. He has spilled the blood of his sister; whose safety was his first and foremost responsibility. In his anxiety, he could think of nothing else but this. Utterly overwhelmed, he timidly asked his sister, "O my sister, bring that teaching which you were reading. I will read it too."

The spark of his sister's faith was now ignited. She was no longer a woman, but a lioness and Hazrat 'Umar[ra] was no longer a man, but a jackal simply waiting to be preyed upon by a lioness. His sister questioned him, "Can you lay your hands upon this Holy Qur'ān, when you cannot even differentiate between that which is pure and impure?" Hazrat 'Umar[ra], affected by the regret of his cruel

offenses, cowered like a cat before his sister, entreating her, "O sister, what shall I do that I should be allowed to touch the Holy Qur'ān?" His sister replied, "There before you is the washroom. Go there and bathe and then you will be allowed to touch the Holy Qur'ān." Hazrat 'Umar[ra] quietly left to bathe and returned before his sister.

A slumbering flame of hope ignited within his sister's heart and with a rapidly beating heart, she began to wonder if her brother could also join her within the light of Islam. With trembling hands, she handed Hazrat 'Umar[ra] those very pages of the Holy Qur'ān that she and her husband had been studying. For the first time, he was reading the Holy Qur'ān with his heart free of prejudice. He had read only a few verses when the Holy Qur'ān subdued him. Upon reading a few more verses, his eyes filled with tears. He read further and he grew disgusted with his own disbelief. He looked upon his past with revulsion and as he continued to read, he felt his heart soar away from him. He rose in a passion and asked where the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] lived.

At that moment, his sister who had been lovingly gazing upon him and had been praying for her sibling to be redeemed and guided aright, heard, "Where does the Prophet live?" This question scattered her thoughts of love for her brother. Now, the fountain of her heart erupted in her love for the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa]. She questioned if her brother's passion was only temporary and ill intentions still remained hidden within him. [She thought], 'If he intends to kill my beloved, the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa], what should I do?' She threw to the side all thoughts of Hazrat 'Umar accepting Islam and became overwhelmed with her love for the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa]. She took Hazrat 'Umar[ra] by his collar and with a passion which only love can create, shouted, "By God, I will not let you go to see the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] unless you swear that you are not going with ill intentions."

Hazrat 'Umar[ra] gazed upon his sister in a docile manner, similar to that of a chicken which gazes upon a sword at the time of slaughter, and said, "I am going to become a Muslim." Had such words ever been uttered as these? A dead sister was given life

[because of Hazrat 'Umar's[ra] change of heart]. She let go of Hazrat 'Umar's[ra] collar and she thanked God for this blessing which had reunited a separated brother and sister and had changed the Khataab household from a hell into heaven. Hazrat 'Umar's[ra] sister told him that the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] was at the home of Umme Hani. Hazrat 'Umar[ra] set off quietly.

When he arrived at the house of the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] and knocked at the door, the companions saw him through the crevices of the doors and informed the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] that Hazrat 'Umar[ra] stood with a sword in his hand, knocking upon the door. They advised him that it would be unwise to open the door at that time, however the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] replied, "It does not matter. Open the door." Hazrat 'Umar[ra] entered, while holding his sword. The Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] proceeded ahead, pulled him by his collar and said, "Your bad intentions have not yet changed." Hazrat 'Umar[ra] cast his eyes down and said, "O Prophet of Allah, I have not come here with bad intentions, I have come to be included among your servants."

Upon hearing these words, the Muslims exuberantly raised the slogan, "God is the Greatest" and it echoed in Mecca from one corner to the other.

This incident indicates that Hazrat 'Umar's[ra] acceptance of Islam was the result of the preaching and sacrifice of a woman. Consequently, [the reward] of that work which Hazrat 'Umar[ra] accomplished after accepting Islam, was also enjoyed equally by his sister, as she was the cause of him having accepted Islam.

When a delegation from Medina came to invite the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] to migrate to Medina, a woman was also included in this delegation. This delegation met with the Holy Prophet[sa] at one o'clock in the morning and even at that time this woman insisted upon being part of this delegation. The delegation expressed their desire for the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] to come to Medina when he felt the need to migrate. This woman was full of enthusiasm and sincerity that she always participated in *Jihad* and she raised her children in such a way, that they proved themselves to

be dedicated soldiers of Islam.

When the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] decided to migrate, one particular woman played a role in the proceedings. Asma[ra], Hazrat A'ishah's[ra] older sister, prepared the last meal before the Holy Prophet's[sa] departure from Mecca. At that time, clothing was very scarce. Women had only one big sheet of cloth, which they would wrap around themselves like a *sari* [an Indian dress which involves long fabric wrapped around one's torso and shoulders]. Many of the men did not even have this option. They only had enough cloth to make a loincloth. When Hazrat Asma[ra] could not find a piece of cloth in which to pack the food for the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa], she ripped a piece of fabric from her sari and wrapped the food. When she had ripped her sari for this purpose, it split into two pieces. She then wrapped one piece around her waist. Due to this, she was given the title of "*Zat-un-Nitaqain*" [the lady of the two belts]. Normally, only slave women wore such ripped saris.

Once, after the demise of the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa], someone taunted Abdullah bin Zubair that he was the son of *Zat-un-Nitaqain*, meaning the son of a slave woman. Upon hearing this, one of the companions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] asked him that while taunting Abdullah bin Zubair, had he forgotten the reason for which his mother was called *Zat-un-Nitaqain*? That dress, which serves as the basis for your taunt of his mother, was ripped by her to pack the food for the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa]. Therefore, this is no taunt but rather a proof of his mother's greatness.

When the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] went to Medina, the women were as happy as the men. They welcomed the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] with passionate songs of greetings. They were very grateful to God Almighty that He had caused the moon to rise from *Thaniyat-ul-Wida* [A place where Holy Prophet's[sa] camel stopped when he migrated to Medina] for them. They zealously sang the verse:

طلع البدر علينا من ثنية الوداع

"O people look! The moon rises from the East for people, but God Almighty has raised our moon from *Thaniyat-ul-Wida* for us."

After this, the Muslim women of Medina set forth excellent examples of continuous sacrifice. The examples of sacrifices displayed by the female companions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] cannot be found in the women of any other nation. During the battle of Uhud, when the rumors of martyrdom of the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] spread, the weak and cowardly ran from the battlefield towards Medina. At the same time, the women of Medina were madly running towards the field of Uhud and some of them even reached the battlefield.

It is said of one woman, that upon arriving on the battlefield, she asked a Muslim about the Holy Prophet Muhammad's[sa] wellbeing. The Muslim informed her that her father had died. She said that she was not asking him about her father but was asking about the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa]. In some narrations, it is stated that the Muslim gave her the news of the death of her father, brother, son, and husband. And in another narration, it is stated that he gave her the news of the death of her three relatives: father, brother, and husband. Yet, each time this woman said, "I do not ask you about my relatives, I only ask you about the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa]." The Muslim told her that the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] was well. Afterwards, she ran towards the field of Uhud.

Her statement is proof of how much love she had in her heart for the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa]. She kept running towards the field of Uhud and she would say to any soldier she met on the way:

مَافَعَلَ رَسُوْلُ اللهِ ﷺ

"O! What has the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] done?"

This statement is very typical of a woman. No man can think up a statement such as this, for when a woman's child or husband dies, she laments, 'O, what have you done? You have left, leaving us to remain alone.' Therefore, this statement, 'O! What has the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] done' speaks to the feminine voice and no historian could ever invent such a detail, for none other than women speak in such a way. The woman continued to repeat, "O! What has the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] done? He has become a martyr and has left us to remain." She could not be consoled, even after the

companions reassured her. She insisted to be taken to the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa]. When she saw the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa], she ran towards him[sa] and clung to the hem of his shirt. The Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] said, "O sister! I am grieved to hear that your father, brother and husband have died in the battle". She replied, "You are alive! Therefore, I care not for the death of anyone else."

This was the passion which drew those women toward the field of sacrifices. They proved true to the covenant they had made with Allah.

Hazrat Sa'ad bin Maa'z[ra] was proudly holding the bridle of the animal of the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] upon returning from the battle. His brother had also been killed during the battle. On approaching Medina, he saw his mother coming and said, "O Prophet of Allah, my mother approaches." Hazrat Sa'ad's mother was eighty or eighty-two years old. She was partially blind, and it was difficult for her to distinguish between sunlight and shade. Upon hearing of the martyrdom of the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa], even this old lady hobbled her way out of Medina. When Hazrat Sa'ad informed the Prophet of Allah that his mother was approaching, the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] instructed him to stop his conveyance. When he reached near this old lady, she did not ask about the wellbeing of her sons. When she asked, she asked only after the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa]. Hazrat Saad[ra] replied that he[sa] stood before her. This old lady looked up and with her weak eyes let her gaze wander over the face of the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa].

The Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] said, "O Lady, I am very sorry that your young son has been martyred in this battle." Upon receiving this type of news, one loses their senses, but this old lady lovingly replied, "O Prophet of Allah! What do you say? I feared only for your safety."

These were the women, who worked alongside men to spread Islam and perform *tabligh*. These are the women the Muslim world is proud of, due to their sacrifices.

You have declared your faith in the Promised Messiah, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad[as]. The Promised Messiah[as] is the shadow of the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa]. In other words, you are the shadows of the female companions. Yet, tell me truly. Do you have the same miraculous passion for religion and the same light present within you which they possessed? Are your children as righteous as the progenies of the female companions were? If you ponder upon this, you will find yourselves far behind them.

The level of sacrifices these women made, have yet to be found within this world. The sacrifices they made with their lives were so dear to Allah that He very soon bestowed success upon them. The work which other nations were unable to accomplish over several years, these male and female companions achieved within a few years. When the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] emigrated to Medina, he stood all alone. He was a weak and helpless individual. However, before eight years had passed, he entered Mecca as a conqueror. Within this period, the men and women made sacrifices in such a way that Allah Almighty's blessings descended upon them with a fervor, and He opened the doors to success for them. Upon the demise of the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa], Islam had spread throughout the whole of Arabia.

At the occasion of each sacrifice, the female companions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] would inquire, "O Messenger! Can we not partake in this sacrifice? Men may offer themselves for every field of sacrifice, but we cannot partake in any *Jihad*. Why do you not let us participate in this as well?"

The women from that era competed with men in making sacrifices, but today, women compete with men in proving their indolence.

The Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] was once preparing to leave for a battle when a female companion joined the army. When the male companions stopped her, she asked, "Why? Why can I not go? Is it not our duty to serve Islam as well?" Upon hearing this reply, the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] laughed and said, "Take her with us." She was assigned to provide water and first aid to the injured. After

the success, when the spoils were distributed, this woman received a share equivalent to the men.

After this incident, it became routine for the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] to take some women along when going into battle, to serve as nurses and look after the injured. Often, his wives accompanied him and did the work of nursing. In the Battle of Uhud, the daughter of the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa], Hazrat Fatimah[ra], accompanied them as well. There was no battle in which the female companions were left behind. For this reason, whenever righteous men are mentioned in the Holy Qur'ān, God Almighty has mentioned righteous women as well. If this same spirit develops within our Ahmadi women, then Ahmadiyyat will progress far more rapidly. However, I regret to say that our Ahmadi women believe that performing *tabligh* or making sacrifices for Islam is only the men's job. They believe their job is simply to cook and take care of the children.

How many among you preach regularly? I believe that from all the women who accept Ahmadiyyat, not even one out of a thousand do women's *tabligh*. Most of them accepted Ahmadiyyat because of their fathers, brothers, or sons. They are indebted to men for their faith.

Thousands of women live in your neighborhood. Men cannot perform *tabligh* to women. Only women can do so. If you truly understand your responsibility, then if every year, men bring in two to four hundred other men into the fold of Ahmadiyyat in Delhi, and women bring in an equal number of women into the fold of Ahmadiyyat, it will not simply be two to four hundred men and four hundred women accepting Ahmadiyyat. Rather, it will be their brothers, sisters, sons, and daughters, who will also enter Ahmadiyyat and thus, the speed of *tabligh* will double.

Yet, I ask you this: have you ever felt within you that desire to do *tabligh*? Have you ever tried to understand the responsibilities and obligations of being an Ahmadi? Ahmadiyyat does not mean that you simply give a few rupees to *chanda* or that you sprinkle some drops of water upon your face when performing ablution and then go

recite two or four *rukū'*.

In fact, Ahmadiyyat is the name of such a bond with Allah Almighty that a true union is established between Master and slave and that person is included among His loved and chosen ones.

Allah Almighty does not discriminate between His servants and His doors are open for everyone. Yet, what is required is that a person develop a burning desire within them to seek Allah Almighty that one cannot live without this, and the true purpose of their life is to grow close to God Almighty.

During the period of the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa], men sacrificed and became the recipients of Allah's bounty; similarly, women also sacrificed for Allah and received His bounty. In fact, sometimes they even excelled men. Within Islamic Jurisprudence, no man has ever reached the rank that Hazrat A'ishah[ra] holds.

Today, the issue of finality of prophethood is a matter of great contention between Ahmadis and non-Ahmadis. We assert that after the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] a subordinate prophet can appear, but non-Ahmadis claim that the door of prophethood is forever closed after the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] and no prophet of any kind can now appear. It is due to this very disagreement that friction has continued to last year after year between us and them. [Yet, notice] how well one woman has resolved this conflict.

After the death of the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa], Hazrat A'ishah[ra] overheard some people focus upon the words:

لَانَبِیَّ بَعْدِیْ in place of خاتم النبیّین

Upon hearing this, she said:

قُوْلُوْا اِنَّهٗ خَاتَمُ الْاَنْبِیَاءِ وَلَا تَقُوْلُوْا لَا نَبِیَّ بَعْدَهٗ

[Certainly do say, he (the Holy Prophet) is the Seal of all Prophets, but do not say, there is no Prophet after him.]

You may indeed say that he is *Khātamun-Nabiyyīn,* but do not say that no other prophet can appear after the Holy Prophet[sa]. Hazrat A'ishah[ra] made it clear with this statement that *Khātamun-Nabiyyīn*

does not signify that no other prophet will appear after the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa]. Hazrat A'ishah[ra] sensed the possibility that people might fall into the danger of believing that no prophet could now appear after him[sa]. For she knew that the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] himself had prophesied the advent of a prophet after him and the Holy Qur'ān prophesied that there would be a second commencement of the prophethood of the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa]. She also understood that the dead could not come back to life in this world, therefore a second coming indicated that a person in the likeness of the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] would appear. Hazrat A'ishah[ra] understood this concept, but other illustrious Companions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] could not comprehend this. While Hazrat A'ishah's[ra] statement explains this well, it is Hazrat ʿAli's[ra] saying which is most powerful.

A person tutored Hazrat 'Ali's[ra] sons, Hazrat Hassan[ra] and Hazrat Hussain[ra]. Once, Hazrat 'Ali[ra] was passing by when he overheard the teacher teaching his children the concept of *Khātimun-Nabiyyīn*. Hazrat 'Ali[ra] interrupted and told him not to teach his children of *Khātimun-Nabiyyīn*, but rather teach them of *Khātamun-Nabiyyīn.* In other words, both are forms of pronunciations, but he preferred the latter one. For *Khātamun-Nabiyyīn* means seal of the prophets, but *Khātimun-Nabiyyīn* means the termination of all prophethood. Teach my children the *ta* with a *zabar* [in Arabic, the punctuation mark *fatah*].

Today, every Muslim, whether he be a scholar or illiterate, except for Ahmadis, holds fast to the belief that after the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa], there can be no other prophet. However, 1300 years earlier, Hazrat A'ishah[ra] ensnared this error and refuted it with such compelling words. What a magnificent solution it was that she presented!

Similarly, there are a many more examples and many more situations, where women have excelled over men.

Once the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] sent a body of troops for battle and appointed Hazrat Zaid[ra] as their leader. He was the Holy Prophet Muhammad's[sa] slave whom the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa]

had liberated. After being freed, Hazrat Zaid[ra] did not wish to leave the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa]. Hazrat Zaid's[ra] uncle and father came to take him back. They requested the Holy Prophet[sa] to allow Hazrat Zaid[ra] to accompany them back home. His mother had lost her eyesight [due to her] crying for him. The Holy Prophet[sa] said he had already set Hazrat Zaid[ra] free, and he gladly permitted him to go with them. He sent for Hazrat Zaid[ra] and told him that his father and uncle had come to take him back with them and he should go.

The reality was that Hazrat Zaid[ra] was from a free family. When he was younger, Christian robbers had kidnapped him. After being repeatedly sold from place to place, he was finally bought by Hazrat Khadijah[ra]. When the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] married Hazrat Khadijah[ra], she dedicated this slave to him, and the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] freed him. Hazrat Zaid's[ra] father asked the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa], "Take as much money as you wish and release Zaid[ra]." The Holy Prophet[sa] replied, "I have already freed him, and you have my full permission to take Zaid[ra] back with you."

The Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] told Hazrat Zaid[ra], "Your parents are devastated due to their separation from you therefore you should go with them." Hazrat Zaid[ra] replied, "You may have freed me, but I do not consider myself to be free. I am not ready to leave you under any condition and you are dearer to me than my parents." Pointing to himself, he then stated, "I love my mother so very much. Give her my salaam but tell her that my love for the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] is greater than my love for her." When Hazrat Zaid[ra] gave this response to his father, the Holy Prophet Muhammad's[sa] heart filled with such love, that he stood and announced:

"O People, listen! From today on, Zaid[ra] is my son." At that time, the tradition of *mutabanna* [Custom of considering the adopted son to be one's actual son in all respects] was still permitted and was not yet forbidden. The Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] appointed Hazrat Zaid[ra] to be the officer to lead the army as I mentioned above. However, along with this, he also stated, "I appoint Hazrat Zaid[ra] to be the leader of this army, but if he dies in battle then Hazrat Jaffar[ra] will take over and if he is killed, then Hazrat Abdullah Bin Rawah[ra] will lead them. If he is also killed, then whomever the Muslims agree

upon as a leader, will be appointed."

At the time, the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] made this announcement, a Jew was sitting near him. He commented, "I do not consider you to be a true Prophet, but if you are, then not one of these three men will come back alive. For that which a prophet speaks, always comes to be true." The Jewish man went to Hazrat Zaid[ra] and said, "If your prophet is true, then you will not come back alive." Hazrat Zaid[ra] replied, "Allah knows best if I will come back alive or not, but our Prophet is true."

It was God's wisdom that this prophecy was to be fulfilled in exactly this way. First, Hazrat Zaid[ra] was martyred, after which Hazrat Jaffar[ra] took over the army. He was also martyred. After him, Hazrat Abdullah Bin Rawah[ra] took charge of the army and he also laid down his life. The whole army nearly fell into disarray, when Hazrat Khālid bin Walīd, upon the persuasion of some Muslims, took the flag in his hand. Allah Almighty granted the Muslims victory through him and the army successfully returned home.

When the army returned to Medina, the relatives of those Muslims who were martyred began to wail. At the time, the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] sensed that no sound of wailing or crying was coming from Hazrat Jaffar's[ra] home. This might be because he was the Holy Prophet's[sa] brother [cousin] and being so, his family was more aware of Islamic law. Hence, they set an excellent example of patience. Secondly, because of the migration from Mecca, only his wife remained at home and there was no other loved one [living with them].

At the time, all of Medina was stricken with grief and sadness. The women were crying for their relatives, but Hazrat Jaffar's[ra] home was desolate. Consequently, upon observing this disparity, the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] commented that there was nobody to cry for Hazrat Jaffar[ra]. The Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] uttered this statement, and the companions bowed their heads in embarrassment.

Many among them left the gathering and went home and asked their sisters and wives what they were doing there. The Holy

Prophet Muhammad[sa] had just commented that everyone mourned for their own relatives, but no one mourned at Hazrat Jaffar's home. Upon hearing this, all the women in Medina went to Hazrat Jaffar's[ra] home (at the time, the tradition of wailing for the deceased was practiced and had not yet been prohibited). The women began to cry loudly and beat themselves. Due to the women's wailing, a great hue and cry arose in Medina. When the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] heard this, he questioned his companions as to what this noise was. The companions replied that since he had said that there was no one to mourn for Hazrat Jaffar[ra], upon hearing his comment, all the women of Medina had now gathered at his home and were crying for Hazrat Jaffar[ra]. The Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] replied, "This was not what I meant. I do not approve of crying. Go and stop them from doing so." Yet now the women were very emotionally involved and crying over the martyrdom of the Holy Prophet Muhammad's[sa] brother. A regret had grown in their hearts that we have mourned our own family members and brothers, but there is no one to mourn the Holy Prophet Muhammad's[sa] brother, therefore this wailing is borne from our adoration and is of sincere passion. In the meantime, one of the companions arrived there and said, "Be quiet. Be quiet. Do not wail, for the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] does not approve of this." The women responded, "Go. Go back to your home. How is it that the Holy Prophet's[sa] brother has been martyred and we do not mourn him [by wailing]?"

When the women did not refrain from crying, the companion approached the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] and said, "O Prophet, I have attempted my best to stop them from wailing, but they will not cease." The Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] said leave them well alone. After crying for so long, they will gradually cease crying on their own. At this moment, the Holy Prophet[sa] used this phrase:

احث التراب علٰی وجو ههنّ

[Cast dust in their faces]

'Throw dust upon their faces,' which meant to leave them alone. In Punjabi, there is also a saying 'let him eat muck,' which means leave the person alone. It appears that the companion was not too intelligent. He heard the phrase:

احث التراب علٰی وجو ههنّ

When he heard it, he stood up, and went back. He returned and collected some dust in the sheet he used to cover his shoulders. He began to throw the dust upon the women's faces. When Hazrat A'ishah[ra] saw this, she asked him what he was doing. The companion told her that the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] had said:

احث التراب علٰی وجو ههنّ

At this she said, "Are you so ignorant that you cannot comprehend the meaning behind his statement? The meaning was to let them be and they would quiet down on their own." Now, see how Hazrat A'ishah[ra] grasped the meaning of the Holy Prophet Muhammad's[sa] statement while the male companion did not.

Hence in no aspect of religion and sacrifice are women left behind. The examples of women that I have presented before you were still women. The only difference is that they were not as delicate as you and they were fully aware of their responsibilities. If you also wish to be an heir to the blessings which the male and female companions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] were heirs to, then strive to follow in their footsteps.

The days of simply talking are over. Every passing day brings greater trials and misfortunes for Muslims. In the future, you will also face that which the men face, including those trials and tribulations which will confront men. Many of the wives of the Ahmadis who were martyred in Kabul faced great trials. Women were widowed and children became orphans. They were forced to deal with imprisonment for a lengthy period of time. Likewise, if the future holds hardships for Ahmadiyyat, you will face them equally. Hence, be vigilant and banish all indolence. Unless the women work shoulder to shoulder with men, *tabligh* cannot be successful and Islam will not prevail over the world.

Therefore, I was greatly saddened when the Secretary of Lajna Ima'illah here informed me that women partake very little in religious affairs and attendance in their meetings is very low. Most women say that their daily routine allows them little time to attend Lajna meetings, while others say that their men do not allow them to

go out. Do you believe that your faith is subordinate to your husbands or your brothers? On such occasions, if your brother or husband stops you from doing religious work, then you should make it abundantly clear to them that you are not willing to obey them in this matter, [and say that this is so] 'because after death, I will be answerable to Allah Almighty, not to you.'

When the commandment of *purdah* was newly revealed, a companion asked a man for his daughter's hand in marriage. The companion agreed, but the man set forth the condition that he would not marry her until he saw the girl. When the girl's father was presented with this condition, he refused and said he was not ready to show his daughter to him. The companion who wished to marry the girl, sat in a gathering before the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] and stated, "O Prophet of Allah[sa], one man wishes to marry but the girl's family refuses to show her face. What should be done in such a situation?" The Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] replied, "Islam has given the instruction for *purdah*, but upon the occasion of marriage, it is permitted to see the woman." That companion went back and told the father that he had asked the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] and he had said that in this type of situation, it is acceptable for the woman to show her face. The father replied, "It is not a question of whether it is acceptable or not acceptable. I am unwilling to show her. This is how I slight you."

The daughter was listening to their conversation from inside and with an outburst of emotion, she pushed the curtain aside and said, "If this is the Holy Prophet Muhammad's[sa] directive, then my father has no right to refuse you. I stand here before you. Look upon me."

At that time, the standard of righteousness of Muslim men and women was very high. As soon as she appeared, saying that if the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] says this, then what right has my father to refuse you to see me, the companion's eyes lowered in respect. He stated, "By God, I will marry that girl who holds the Holy Prophet Muhammad's[sa] instruction in such high regard without seeing her face." Hence, this companion married her without seeing her. Such were the women whose hearts were full of the grandeur of Allah and

the greatness of the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa].

Hence, your father and your brother have authority over you until and unless they become a hindrance in your path towards attaining faith. However, if they stop you from participating in religious works and you obey them instead of God, then you have taken your brother or your husband as your God. Rather than attaining righteousness, you have committed a sin and instead of becoming a good believer, you have become a disbeliever. Your faith should be that which you hold dearest to you and when fighting for your faith, you should care for no one else.

Syed Ahmed Sahib Barelvi[rh] was a *Mujjadid* [reformer] before the Promised Messiah[as]. When he went to perform Hajj, among his caravan were nearly a hundred women who had never stepped out of their homes uncovered. When they did go out, a *doli* would be taken to their room and they would leave their home sitting inside of it. If they had to walk from one street to the other, arrangements for *purdah* were made before they could pass. When these hundred women went for Hajj to Mecca and the time came to circuit the Holy Ka'bah, Syed Sahib said, "O Sisters! The One God who has ordered you to cover yourself is now the same God who forbids you to cover yourself while circuiting the Holy Ka'bah."

History tells us that without uttering a single word, all the women unveiled their faces. Such was the faith of the women in the thirteenth century, who did not have the means to enlighten themselves as you have. They had not witnessed as many signs and miracles as you have. Why then, can you not rid yourself of indolence? If you will not do *tabligh,* then who else will? Men cannot preach to women because of *purdah* and if you will also not preach to them, then how will Ahmadiyyat spread amongst women? Women who have abandoned their *purdah* have no more interest in religion. They have become disbelievers, and they are even unwilling to listen to religious discussions. Women who observe *purdah* will speak of religion and it is only you who can reach others.

Hence, *tabligh* is your responsibility in the same measure as it is of the men. If you will not work side by side with men in religious affairs, then you are not a functional part of the Jama'at. Rather, you are a blister, which stops a person from carrying out his duties efficiently. A blister may prompt the increase of flesh, but it does not increase the strength of the body. Rather, it is a sign of disease. Would anyone wish a blister to remain a part of his body? Therefore, we also do not wish our women to damage the rest of our body by being a rotten limb. If they remain so, then they will surely deserve to be amputated from the rest of the body.

Thus, forego your indolence and weaknesses and make yourself a useful part of Ahmadiyyat. Instill within yourself the resolve that either you will establish Ahmadiyyat, or you will die. Until you establish this as your mission, you cannot play a useful role within Ahmadiyyat. Strive to fulfill any responsibilities given to you, so that when you stand before God Almighty, you stand as a victorious servant. To accomplish this, it is necessary for you to induce a massive transformation within yourselves so that you, your neighbors, and the rest of the world become aware that you have been imbued with a new soul. You should learn religion for yourself and teach it to your children. If you will not learn it for yourself, how will you perform *tabligh* to other women? You should possess a great zeal for *tabligh*, so much so that if you are living in a house for one to two years and your *tabligh* has not proven to be effective, you should then ask your brother or husband to relocate elsewhere so you can spread Ahmadiyyat to another people.

Hence, I hold the expectation that you will reform yourselves before time runs out and you will fear the coming of the Day of Judgment.

I pray to God Almighty that He reforms your hearts and rids you of your ignorance and your immoralities so that you can become a true believer and be a source of glory for us. Now I will pray, and you should all join me in doing so, so that you may rid your hearts of its rust and you emerge triumphant before Allah, (*Amīn*).

Awaken your Emotions and be Mindful of your Faith

A summary in his own words of a speech presented to the Ladies at Jalsa Salana

Delivered by Hazrat Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmood Ahmad, Khalifat-ul-Masih II[ra]

December 27, 1946

Hazrat Khalifat-ul-Masih[ra] said:

The presence of a loudspeaker negates the need for a separate speech to the ladies, but on the other hand, it is still important for the ladies to be addressed separately. Islam has forbidden the concept of free intermingling of genders. Upon the surface, they appear to be two separate beings, but truly they are one. The relationship between man and woman is not [based upon] rule of law, but upon love.

The mother does not learn how to love her child. This relationship is not dependent upon any rule of law. She acts according to that instinct which nature has imbued within her. The truth is that this relationship is neither bound by any laws nor by any guide. No complications can arise if the basis of a relationship between a man and a woman is love. When the parents arrange for the marriages of their sons and daughters, they list a series of demands. I have often witnessed that those people who set up conditions are more likely to be involved in lawsuits. These sorts of demands always lead to conflict and disagreement. If a man and a woman establish a relationship based upon righteous sentiments, their journey will succeed. If it is not established on piety, conflict and discord will ensue.

Laws and conditions change with circumstances. However, if the foundation is based upon love, then no demand can survive, whereas if the demands prevail, then love cannot survive. Of the two, one will certainly shatter. As God has created men to be of utmost worth for women and women to be of utmost worth for men, and a woman's emotions inspire her to believe that she cannot live without

men and men believe that they cannot survive without women, the truth of these emotions prove that those people who establish such terms and conditions are extremely foolish.

It is sheer stupidity to establish laws for emotions. These principles were in fact ingrained within our nature at the time Adam[as] was created. Our only job is to nurture our pure and honorable emotions. A mother understands how to go about taking proper care of her child and how to train him. Now, if a law was established that a child's bed should be changed every five hours, then how could a child suffering from diarrhea, stay in one bed for five hours? God Almighty has instilled a mother's nature with the ability to manage these matters for herself. Any law established for those matters, which have no proper timings, will inevitably hinder man.

Thus, there is no need to establish any sort of laws for life. At the same time, there is a need to educate women in specific matters. Therefore, certain lectures are beneficial for women. I initiated the establishment of Lajna Ima'illah [in different towns] the year before last for the purpose of this special training. At that time, there were forty to fifty Lajnaat and now there are two hundred and twenty-five. The men's branches number about one thousand. If the law of equality holds true for women, then there should be an equal number of Lajnaat as well. Even if it is half, then Lajnaat should still number five hundred.

Women protest that they should be held equal with men in obtaining jobs. If they can work in post offices and hospitals as well as men do, then they should also work equally hard in matters of religion. As God has prescribed five daily prayers for men, He has ordained it for women. Likewise, as fasting is for men, it is prescribed for women. Thus, just as men are obligated to work in matters of religion, so are women. There is no reason for them to lag behind in the field of religion. The Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] said, "Learn half of the religion from A'ishah[ra]." This purports that half the share of the religion is men's and half of the share is women's. It means that one woman holds half of the religion and the entire world's men and women hold the other half. Take any aspect [of the

religion]. Women will not lag behind. Therefore, attend to your religion. Teach those who are illiterate. If in some places, there are no literate women, then request mature women from Qadian, who do not require a man to accompany them, to visit that town for four to five months to educate these women. When you learn to read and write in your own language, you will understand your religion all the better.

I advise you to first set up a Lajna auxiliary and then set up a system of education. Organize yourselves. If you learn how to read and write, you will be able to preach very easily in your area. You will then see that the membership of the Jama'at will grow, not by the hundreds, but by the thousands, *In Sha' Allah*.

After this, Hazrat Khalifat-ul-Masih II[ra] led the silent prayer.

Four Important Exhortations

1-Congregational Prayers
2-Establishment of the Lajna Ima'illah
3-Truthfulness
4-Work Ethic

Delivered by Hazrat Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmood Ahmad, Khalifat-ul-Masih II[ra]

December 28, 1946

Men should establish Lajna Ima'illah wherever it has not yet been formed. Many women have complained to me that men do not cooperate with them. Some [men] even stop them from attending Lajna meetings. Then, there are some [men] who create obstacles when the women wish to establish Lajna Ima'illah. This is dangerous. Unless women work side by side with men in the service of religion, we cannot progress. If women do not work side by side with us to construct that outside structure of Islam, then they will bring this structure crumbling down from within. Bring your child to the meeting. Advise and exhort him in good teachings. Let him hear matters of faith. However, if your wife is not imbued with that same

spirit, which Islam wishes for its women to have, then as soon as your child is at home she will tell him, “Your father has lost his wits. He takes you to the mosque upon his own whims and this will damage your health, therefore you must refrain from it.” If the father urges his child to lead an economically frugal life, the mother says, “Your father’s advice is solely due to stinginess. He calls it faith, but the real reason is that his heart does not allow him to spend on your needs. You may fulfill your heart’s desires. I am ready to help you.” Take notice. If something like this is happening within a home, it is as if two swords clash against each other, one from the front and one from behind. It is inevitable that no peace can be found wherever two swords strike against one another.

Thus firstly, our Jama‘at should develop in themselves the habit of saying their prayers in congregation.

Secondly, the Jama‘at should instill in themselves a good work ethic, specifically regarding the implementation of their responsibilities as a Jama‘at. Whoever is appointed with a task, should keep the following principle at the forefront of his mind: I will not back away from this, even at the risk of death. Unless such a spirit is developed within them, the Jama‘at cannot fully progress.

Thirdly, Lajna Ima’illah should be established everywhere, and special consideration should be given to their spiritual education and reformation.

Fourthly, truthfulness should be established within the Jama‘at. As long as truthfulness is maintained within a nation, it cannot lose. In this respect, I see that this weakness still stands within our Jama‘at. In matters of litigations, some people give evidence in such a convoluted manner that even the judge is confounded whether he should rule one way or the other. Although, it should be very easy to reach a decision in litigation cases between believers, for the Holy Qur’ān has urged every believer to be truthful. In other words, what you present should not only be the truth, but it should also be free of any twisting of the truth. There are many things which are true but are made into lies by twisting the words. It is for this very reason that the Holy Qur’ān has advised us

to be both truthful and straightforward.

Four Pieces of Advice

After giving you these words of advice, I bid you farewell with prayers. If people implement this council, then God Almighty will also bless your efforts in *tabligh*. He will bless your affairs and will draw the victory of Islam near. It is these four walls upon which the structure of Islam stands.

I will now pray and bid you farewell. While praying for yourselves and your relatives, keep in mind to also pray for the progress of Islam and Ahmadiyyat, and for the success of the missionaries, who have traveled to faraway lands in the service of Islam. To such places, where no pleasure or comfort is available to them. Where there is no one to listen to their conversations. Where there is no one to sympathize with them. Where there is no one to share their burden. Yet, they immerse themselves in the service of Islam night and day. Governments have become their enemies. The public is against them. Society gazes upon them unfavorably. In short, people at all levels of society oppose them, but they continue to convey the teachings of Islam and Ahmadiyyat to people.

Therefore, while it is your duty to not shirk from doing whatever you can for the progress of Islam, you should also pray for those missionaries, who offer so much sacrifice.

I received many telegrams for prayers at the occasion of this gathering, but I cannot read them out to you now. It will be sufficient to say that we should pray for our friends, in particular the missionaries, who are especially deserving of our prayers. Actually, it would be incorrect to say that they need our prayers. Rather, the reality is that it is incumbent upon us to pray for them, for they have left their countries to work on our behalf. Their claim has now been laid upon us in such a way, that their rights can only be fulfilled by our prayers and supplications. Other than this, we have no other way to fulfill their rights.

Now, I will pray for you and also for Islam and Ahmadiyyat.

You should also pray for me, as well as for the missionaries of this movement, that Allah Almighty rewards their efforts.

Especially pray for those four things I have just mentioned. May our Jama‘at stand firm in regard to them. Unless faced with exceptional difficulties, be regular in congregational prayer. If the obligatory prayer must be offered in the home, then include your wife and children so that the Salāt is offered in congregation. Secondly, establish truthfulness. Such truthfulness that astounds even your enemies. Thirdly, [foster] the habit of working hard; such a habit of working hard, that making excuses and apologies is completely wiped out from our Jama‘at. Whoever is entrusted with a duty should discharge that duty with complete diligence or perish in their attempt to do so. Fourthly, the reformation of women: establish Lajna Ima’illah in all places and work hard to disseminate women’s spiritual education.

At this time, it is these four matters, to which I have drawn your attention. You should pray that God Almighty enables all of you to follow these instructions, so that when you all return to the Jalsa Salana next year, you will be able to lay your hand on your heart and say that you have acted upon my advice. In fact, there will be no question of even having to lay your hand upon your heart. The truth is, that if you act upon these points, such transformations will take place that you will require no testimony from anyone. God and His Angels will themselves, testify that you have acted upon them. Now I shall pray.

After this, Hazrat Khalifat-ul-Masih II[ra] led a lengthy prayer, and after saying *As-Salamu ‘Alaikum,* gave permission to the members to depart.

Safeguarding the Rights of Women

Delivered by Hazrat Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad Khalifat-ul-Masih II[ra]

January 31, 1947

Today, I would like to draw your attention to the fact that as far as the question of humanity is concerned, men and women possess the same sentiments and propensities. There are some minor missteps, which can cause man to stumble in matters of great significance, leading to erroneous perceptions and doubts. One of these matters, which I am going to discuss, is related to a woman's rights. The Holy Qur'ān draws attention to this matter by stating:

يٰٓاَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اتَّقُوْا رَبَّكُمُ الَّذِىْ خَلَقَكُمْ مِّنْ نَّفْسٍ وَّاحِدَةٍ وَّ خَلَقَ مِنْهَا زَوْجَهَا

"O! Mankind, be mindful of your duty to your Lord, Who created you from a single soul and created therefrom its mate."

(Holy Qur'ān Ch. 4: V. 2)

As far as human nature is concerned, a woman is created in the same way as man is. In the words:

خَلَقَ مِنْهَا زَوْجَهَا

[*"...and created therefrom its mate..."*]

Allah Almighty has brought our attention to the point, that there is no difference in the nature of man and woman. Women possess the same nature and desires as men do, therefore, women should be given the same rights as men have. In no way, does this verse imply that all of mankind was created from one soul [person], for that inference would contain no element of wisdom.

Harmful Effects of Failing to Fulfill Women's Rights

It is highly regrettable that for so long, women have been deprived of their natural rights. This is true not only in India, but also in Europe and America. Therefore, every so often women rise up against men over this state. For it is human nature which most certainly forces them to rise and compels them to rebel after suffering such prolonged suppression and torture.

The daily protests by the *Achooths* [the Untouchables: a working class disparaged by other Hindu sects] and the laborers are a result of the same cruelty they have faced. However, as far as basic human needs are concerned, one can even live without *Achooths* and worldly business affairs can continue without laborers. As such, we see neither untouchables nor many laborers in Europe. People still manage to do their own work.

Yet, if women decide to rebel, not only will the business of the world stop, but the entire world will come to an end. Just imagine such a rebellion. How fearful it would be if women decided to rebel against men! If women refuse to bear children, how would the world survive? Indeed, this would lead to the end of the human race and to moral corruption. Thus, to persist in that injustice [of suppressing women] which could lead to such highly dangerous consequences is utter stupidity.

It is Imperative for Women to Participate in Righteous Deeds

You should pay special attention in fulfilling women's rights. Just as it is essential for men to participate in virtuous deeds, it is just as essential that women be given the opportunity to participate. I received a letter from a woman, in which she wrote that her husband would not allow her to pay her own *chanda.* He says that his *chanda* covers her dues as well, although this is incorrect. Just as man's nature requires that he perform good deeds with his own hands, so does a woman's nature compel her to earn her own rewards by doing good deeds. Righteousness purifies the heart. Unless one performs one's own deeds, how can their self be cleansed? Just as one cannot perform Salāt on another person's behalf, similarly one cannot pay *chanda* on

another's behalf. Therefore, you should grant women the opportunity to participate in such matters, including *chanda*, in order that their natural desire is fulfilled. This is not only limited to the matter of *chanda*. I have only mentioned it as an example. You must believe women to be your equal in every aspect of life and accord them their rights.

In regard to men's rights, Allah Almighty has stated:

اَلرِّجَالُ قَوّٰمُوْنَ عَلَى النِّسَآءِ

"Men are appointed guardians over women."

(Holy Qur'ān, Ch. 4: V. 35)

This is because men have the status of veto power in domestic affairs. When a difference of opinion occurs between husband and wife, the man's decision will be final. However, if differences increase and the man begins to abuse his veto power, then the woman can petition for her rights through the court system. I therefore draw the attention of men and especially young men, to establish justice and not create a barrier in the path of [following] Islam.

Payment of *Chanda* from Jewelry and Inheritance

Delivered by Hazrat Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad, Khalifat-ul-Masih II[ra]

April 11, 1947, in Qadian

We have noticed that most women possess some jewelry. Women like to wear jewelry, even if it is only one or two rupees worth. Even the poorest woman wears earrings of eight *aana* (one sixteenth of a rupee) at least. Everyone is rewarded [by Allah] according to what they give.

Therefore, a woman who wears only eight *aana* worth of earrings and gives a single *paisa* (penny) still earns equal reward. Both partake in equal reward. I was saying that the majority of women possess some type of jewelry. If we assume that there are twenty thousand women in our Jama'at and each woman has on average, fifty rupees worth of jewelry, then this amount equals ten *lakh* [one million] rupees. This way we can collect ten thousand rupees of *chanda*. Women have written to me that they are even willing to sell their jewelry to come up with this amount. I have told them that they should also sacrifice according to their means, however we cannot burden you to collect this general fund. Men come first, and then you thereafter. Men should step forward before women. Since men acquire twice as much inheritance, their share of sacrifice should be double as well. Out of their father's estates, a brother gets two rupees while his sister gets only one. It is only befitting that the brother should contribute more than his sister. It is a custom in England that a woman is given precedence in all dignitary affairs. On every such occasion they say, 'ladies first'; for instance, while entering a room, or to be seated for a meal. In short, they honor women in all affairs. By the grace of Allah, our men are not ones to sit back [doing nothing] and tell their women to go ahead [regarding giving *chanda*].

The Responsibility of Women in Extraordinary Circumstances

There could indeed come a time when each and every man is

killed. At that time, it would be the women's obligation that they shed even their last drop of blood while confronting the enemy, since this is what the faith demands. However, while men are still living, it is not the practice of our Jama'at to ask our women to shout slogans. Should all men perish, then certainly, women should step forward and shed even the last drop of their blood to uphold the flag of faith. This is however not their duty in ordinary circumstances. Since they go through the troubles of pregnancy and menstruation, it only indicates that Allah Almighty has created them to stay at home.

Therefore, as long as the last man is alive, it is his duty to give his life in order to protect the women. Thereafter, women can definitely come out and fight. They are maidservants of God, and it is their responsibility as well to uphold the flag of faith. They should therefore sacrifice their lives in the battlefield, but never let the flag of faith fall down.

Anyway, right now I am addressing both. I am addressing both men and women. Among women, those who own property should pay one percent of that property, and those who are given an allowance by their husbands, need to give accordingly. Those who have property greater in value than their income, should pay a share of the property, since a believer prefers to excel in sacrifice and does not turn back. This is a time of trial for the Jama'at. Each individual should make an effort to survive this trial. Within one and a half months, those who pledge their lives will be in the forefront of *waqifeen*.

Also, I have drawn your attention to maximize the number of those participating in the scheme of *Wasiyyat*. There should be no man or woman left who is not a *musi*. Excel in your faith and sincerity. Vie with each other in doing good deeds. I also feel a need to tell you that your donation to this particular scheme should not affect other *chandas*. It should not result in cuts in monthly *chanda, wasiyyat, or Tahrik-e-Jadid chandas.* Paying one obligation towards Allah, by cutting short on others, is never fruitful. It lessens your reward.

(*Al-Fazl*, 16 April 1947)

A New Era for *Misbah* Magazine

Delivered by Hazrat Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad Khalifat-ul-Masih II[ra]

In Qadian, in the 'New Era of *Misbah*' edition, Hazrat Khalifat-ul-Masih II[ra] blessed the magazine with his following writing:

"You must have learned through the *Al-Fazl* or other means that *Misbah* is now under the auspices of Lajna Ima'illah. Now men are free of this responsibility, but it does not mean that they are completely forsaking any involvement in this. According to Islam, men and women are not two separate entities, neither are they two separate parts, rather they are two parts of one entity.

They are not one in entirety, because they each are given their own rights. They are not two parts because they are not permitted [by Islam] to live separately from one another. Thus, according to Islam, they are two parts of one entity. They cannot therefore renounce their responsibility towards one another at any cost. Just like you can never lose your interest in men's publications, similarly they cannot lose their interest in yours. It is vital to maintain complete unity of both parts of one entity, otherwise both will be rendered useless. They cannot survive separately since they are components of one unit. They cannot antagonize each other, or their union will prove futile to both. If one part does not support the [function of] the other, it will instead damage it. In this way, they would not even achieve that which they could have individually achieved. Therefore, do not think of your separate magazine as an individual entity, rather, one part of a combined project. Just like one class in a school is divided into two or three sections; it is the same class [grade] only divided into separate sections to facilitate its function. The teacher of one section teaches the same thing as the other, yet more teachers assume a smaller number of students to pay closer attention.

The Law-Maker of Islam is Allah, who is neither a man, nor a woman. He does not therefore, side with men or women. Come then, let us work together following the commands of our Just Creator."

Tahrik Scheme of *Chanda* for Berlin Mosque

Delivered by Hazrat Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad Khalifat-ul-Masih II[ra]

July 20, 1923

Note: This excerpt was received afterwards so it could not be published in the section of the book where Hazrat Khalifat-ul-Masih's[ra] sermons of 1923 are published.

"As I announced in the last Friday Sermon, today by the blessings of Allah Almighty, the foundation of the Berlin Mosque will be laid. The telegram indicates that the time of this ceremony will be three o'clock in the afternoon, which coincides with our [current] time now considering the time difference. This was announced outside, and we have gathered here also to pray to God Almighty that He blesses the building of this mosque. Though a building was purchased for England's Mosque earlier, it has not been renovated yet into a mosque because enough funds have not been collected as of now. That is why this Berlin Mosque is the first Ahmadiyya mosque in Europe. Not only that, but this mosque is also the first mosque built by Muslims. Even though three mosques were built in Europe before this. One of which is in Woking, built by an Englishman. One is in Berlin, which is old and unoccupied, and was also built by the government when prisoners of war were brought from Russia. Many of them were Muslims, totaling about twelve thousand, and hence, the government built that mosque for them. Therefore, in contemporary Europe, this is the first mosque built by Muslims. I said contemporary Europe because Muslims have been living in different parts of Europe for thousands of years and they built mosques there, but once they were forced to convert to Christianity, those mosques were abolished. Even now there are mosques in Europe where Muslims live, but those areas are not considered to be a part of Europe anymore and are rather considered separate. Therefore, this is the first mosque in this area, which is actually considered Europe, and from where Muslims have been evicted. That is why I asked all friends to gather and pray that God Almighty blesses this mosque and make it a source of propagation and development of Islam."

Friday Sermon

Delivered by Hazrat Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad, Khalifat-ul-Masih II[ra]

July 27, 1923

"Some time ago, in this very mosque, I had indicated my wish to build a mosque in Berlin. I also mentioned that our Jama'at is already weak [financially] and is supporting many other expenses. Therefore, to have a mosque built by the weaker section of this weak Jama'at, or in other words, a mosque is to be built by the weakest part of the weakest Jama'at in the world (meaning women, who are weak, because they have neither individual income nor are they as educated as men). They should work on this project, so it can prevail as an outstanding sign.

When I initially made this proposition to women, some people from the Jama'at also thought that it would be impossible to collect that much money. In the beginning, my estimate was thirty thousand rupees, but at the time of the actual initiation [fundraising], I increased the sum to fifty thousand rupees. Our Jama'at also thought it to be a very large amount of money. When the amount received totaled twenty thousand rupees, newspapers from outside of the Jama'at mentioned with amazement the fact that Ahmadi ladies had contributed such a generous sum of money. Then, before the deadline, the total sum amounted to sixty thousand rupees, surpassing the pledges. After this, I again announced the need for more money, and including the pledges this time, it totaled to seventy thousand rupees. This is the accomplishment of the weaker part of the weakest Jama'at of the world. In terms of numbers, our Jama'at is nothing in comparison to other Muslim groups. However, had it been announced in the mainstream Muslim world, that their women should collect this amount within three months, none of them would have been able to do so, even though they have billionaires and millionaires as well as princes and kings among them ..."

(*Al-Fazl*, August 3, 1923, V.8)